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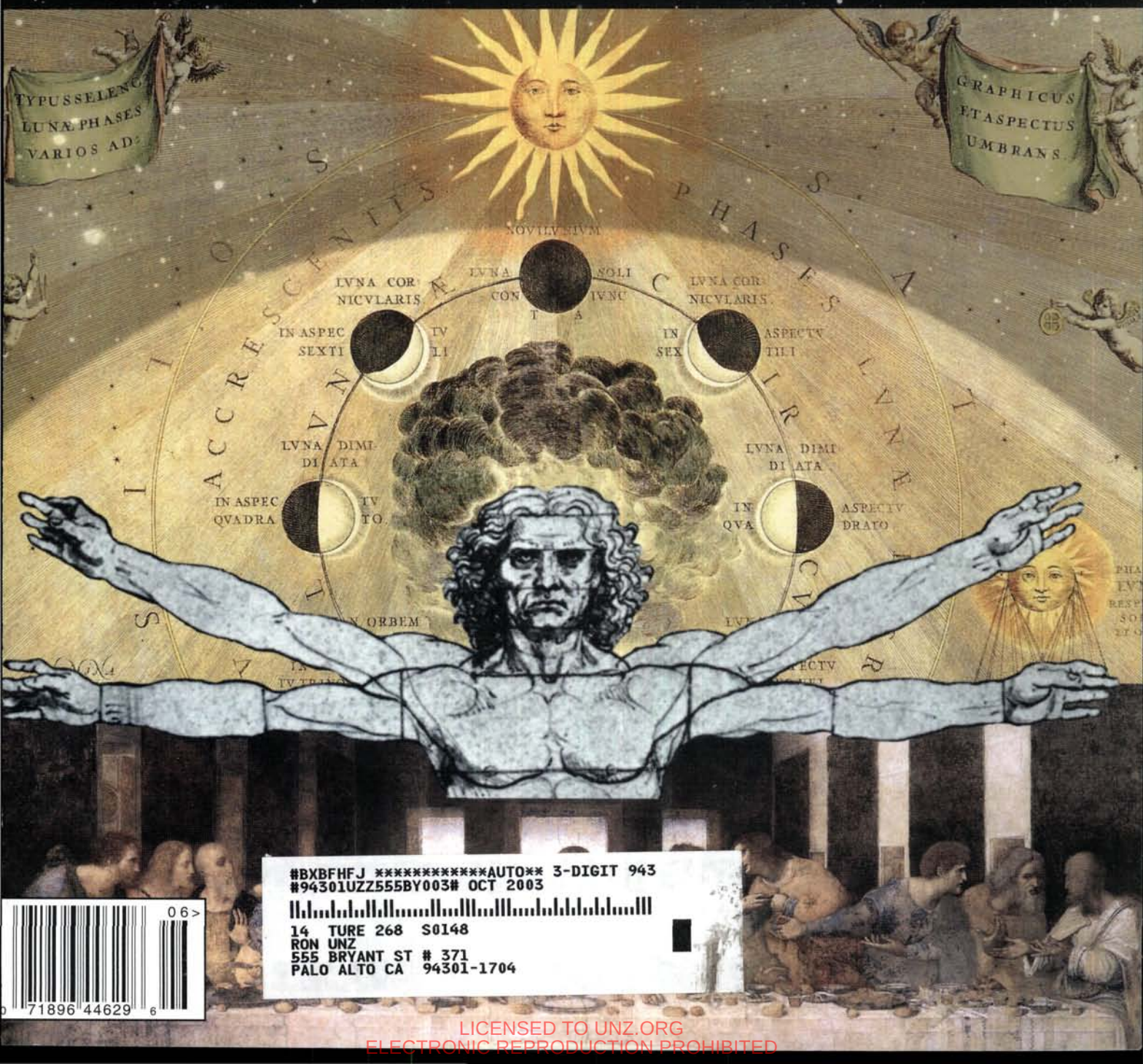

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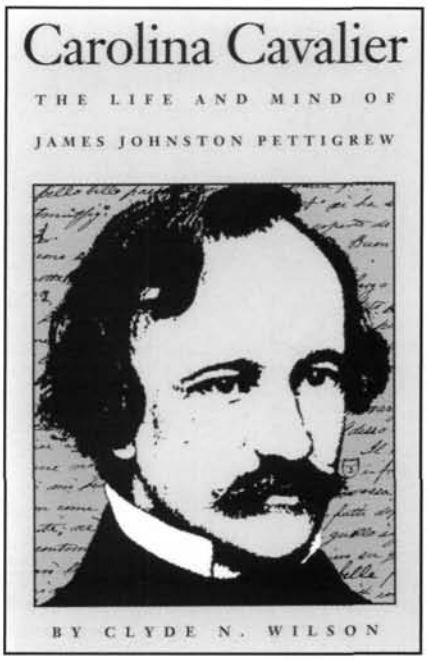

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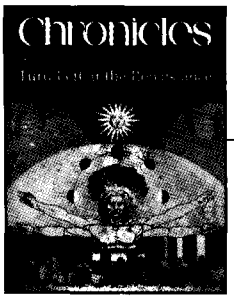

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On the Terror of Tribunals

Dr. Samuel Francis is an outstanding scholar, and he is usually right on target, but, speaking as an attorney, I'm afraid his article "Tribunals for Terror" (*Views*, March) is seriously flawed.

Supporters have argued that tribunals are necessary, in part, to avoid potential intimidation of jurors. Dr. Francis, however, believes that Timothy McVeigh and the first World Trade Center bombers were "tried without mishap" and, therefore, concludes: "There is no reason to suppose that trying Al Qaeda suspects publicly would be any more dangerous, and if such threats did appear, they could be dealt with as necessary." Unfortunately, there is every reason to believe that Al Qaeda is vastly more dangerous than either Mr. McVeigh or the inept World Trade Center bombers, caught when one of their number went back to Ryder to claim his security deposit. But what does he mean when he says that such a threat can be "dealt with as necessary?" Juror intimidation is often undetected, precisely because its purpose is to achieve an acquittal and the subsequent constitutional protection against double jeopardy. But if it is discovered, what should be done? Declare a mistrial and try, try again, putting ever more people at risk? Put the judge, jury, attorneys, witnesses, *et al.*, in a witness-protection program and ruin innocent lives forever?

Dr. Francis dismisses the need for secrecy, arguing that military officers are not more trustworthy than civilian jurors. Unlike civilian jurors, however, U.S. military officers are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), and at least several thousand of them must enjoy top-secret security clearance. His claim that secret information would have to be made available to the defendants is likewise insupportable. Such information would be made available only to the defendants' lawyers, who would be sworn to secrecy—most likely holding top-secret clearance themselves—and who would argue relevance and probity directly to the tribunal, without the need for the presence, involvement, or even the knowledge of the accused.

Dr. Francis believes that the tribunal's new rules of evidence would be "inconsistent with elementary notions of justice." Not true: Our modern rules of evidence in criminal cases originated in the ultra-liberal Warren Court. Under *Miranda*'s infamous Exclusionary Rule, for example, any statement made by, or evidence discovered by reason of statements made by, the accused before he has been read and understands his rights is inadmissible. Is Dr. Francis suggesting that, before *Miranda*, our courts did not dispense justice? Furthermore, most rules of evidence are designed to control either the behavior of the cop on the beat (not the soldier in the field) or the presentation of evidence to the jury—evidence that a judge or a military tribunal could be trusted to weigh properly, but which would be too confusing or inflammatory to be presented safely to a jury. Evidence of past criminal acts, for example, is deemed highly prejudicial in a jury trial and would normally be excluded unless greatly outweighed by its probative value. Would it, therefore, also be "inconsistent with elementary notions of justice" for a military tribunal to consider evidence of an accused's previous acts of terror that had no direct connection with the pending case? I think not, and I think most Americans would agree.

Dr. Francis dismisses the precedent set by George Washington's tribunals because they occurred "before the Constitution had been written," even though the principles set forth in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments were well established in the common law of the time. The right to be free of unreasonable search and seizure—the Fourth Amendment—was a part of Anglo-American law long before the Revolution. Likewise, the precedents for the Fifth and Sixth Amendments—the right to due process and to a public trial by jury—were pillars of colonial criminal law and can be traced as far back as the *Magna Carta*. Thus, George Washington did in fact create a meaningful precedent when he used military tribunals in time of war.

Dr. Francis rightly denounces the botched military trials of Lincoln's assassins, but the issue at hand is whether it is lawful for a military tribunal to try nonmilitary personnel in any circumstances. In this regard, he cites *Ex parte Milligan* for the proposition that "the Constitution is not suspended in time of emergency."

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Again, not true. Justice Davis's opinion is quite clear: Martial rule can be properly applied when, "in foreign invasion or civil war, the courts are actually closed, and there is a necessity to furnish a substitute for the civil authority . . . to preserve the safety of the army and society . . . " Had the case been brought, such circumstances might well have been found to justify the military trials of those implicated in President Lincoln's assassination. More importantly, the Court's holding is expressly based on the fact that Milligan was "not a resident of one of the rebellious states or a prisoner of war . . . " I submit that *Ex parte Milligan* is not controlling authority as to the issue of military trials of noncitizens or prisoners of war; further, contrary to Dr. Francis's assertion, its dicta support the proposition that military courts may lawfully try even *American citizens* under certain extraordinary circumstances.

Dr. Francis states: "[T]he tribunals confuse the functions of war and law enforcement, so that men who would *ordinarily* be considered criminals are considered to be prisoners of war, even though no war has been *formally* declared" (emphasis mine). Apparently, Dr. Francis believes that only a formal declaration of war can change ordinary criminals into prisoners of war. But what would such a declaration of war look like? We could declare war on Al Qaeda, but that is just a name. On Afghanistan? But that is just one staging area among many. On "terrorism"? On Islamic extremists? On the world? No wording would be quite right, would it? Yet our enemy has inflicted the most dastardly attack that this nation has ever suffered and threatens to do so again and again. In order to find a solution to this conundrum, we must reexamine the facts: The terrorists constitute a well-financed, well-organized, highly motivated, extremely dangerous, multinational force warring against the people of the United States. They are clearly not ordinary criminals. An extraordinary process is therefore needed to deal with such extraordinary individuals, and military tribunals are both reasonable and appropriate to the purpose. In this same vein, Dr. Francis correctly states that "POWs are not usually put on trial," but an Islamic terrorist is not your usual POW: He does not fight in uniform, is functionally stateless, does not abide by, and is not bound by, the Geneva Convention, and—contrary to all the rules of war—he attacks unarmed civilians. As Edmund Burke so rightly observed: "The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind." In this time of unprecedented national danger, meaningless formalities and inapt distinctions are noxious in the extreme.

Dr. Francis believes that "[t]he underlying problem with the tribunals is precisely that they might be used against American citizens or serve as a precedent for such use." This is the crux of the matter. The solution, it seems to me, is not to deny the government the use of a necessary and lawful means of defense because an unscrupulous person *might* abuse it in the future, but rather to ensure that our governmental institutions—and the people in them—refrain from unlawful behavior. If some future official wants to violate his oath of office, he will do so whether or not we use military tribunals to bring terrorists to justice.

Finally, Dr. Francis argues that the use of military tribunals will "acclimatize the American public to the erosion of civil liberties and the rule of law." I think the American public is smart enough to understand that the use of military tribunals in this context, against these people, and in the manner proposed is no more a threat to our freedom or to the rule of law than the military trials that occur every day of the week. I believe the case can be made that the Warren Court's pro-defendant legacy has done more to undermine respect for the law than a million military tribunals ever could. What would be the impact, I wonder, if a patently guilty, mass-murdering Al Qaeda terrorist is set free on a *Miranda*-style technicality? Not only is such an outcome possible when the defendant is "arrested" by soldiers on a battlefield, it is far more likely than not. The inevitable public outrage would force the government to take drastic measures—measures that would no doubt entail the sweeping and immediate curtailment of civil liberties. Indeed, if the powers that be really wanted to destroy the rule of law, they could not do better than to engineer just such a result.

Military tribunals can only be justified if they are reasonably necessary for the safety of society and are conducted, insofar as practicable, in accordance with traditional notions of fairness. In view of the precedents, and in view of our exceptional circumstances, I submit that they are not only justified but essential.

—Theodore B. Hannon
Kailua, Hawaii

Dr. Francis Replies:

Most of Mr. Hannon's criticisms are without merit.

(1) "There is every reason to believe that Al Qaeda is vastly more dangerous" than McVeigh or the WTC bombers. I did not say that Al Qaeda was not more dangerous than McVeigh and the WTC bombers. I said, as Mr. Hannon in his previous sentence accurately quotes me as saying, "There is no reason to suppose that trying Al Qaeda suspects publicly would be any more dangerous, and if such threats did appear, they could be dealt with as necessary." The difference is not in the dangerousness of the defendants but in the dangerousness of *trying* the defendants. McVeigh may or may not have had allies (certainly he had many sympathizers), but I also mentioned such groups as Al Capone's gang and the Manson family, and I could have cited many others: notorious criminals who nevertheless had devoted, disciplined, and physically dangerous followers. I can think of none of these kinds of defendants in American history in which secret trials were necessary, and I can think of no reason why trying Al Qaeda suspects would be any more dangerous. (In fact, the public trials for Zacarias Moussaoui and Richard Reid have so far not led to any intimidation or reprisals; moreover, even if trials are conducted in secret, terrorists could still launch reprisals against targets that had nothing to do with the trials.)

(2) "Dealt with as necessary": If jury intimidation is undetected, how would we know it happened? Why should we violate ordinary constitutional procedure on the assumption that it will happen? My phrase "dealing with it as necessary" means taking whatever measures are needed to avoid intimidation of the court as it comes to the knowledge of the authorities. Mistrials may indeed result. (Are mistrials not possible in secret tribunals? Does Mr. Hannon know whether they are or not? Does anyone know?) Such measures would probably involve simply added security for jurors, judges, lawyers, courtrooms, etc. Mr. Hannon merely assumes that the worst case will happen and proposes to alter traditional court procedures on that assumption, whether it is true or not. I believe we should abide by traditional procedure until events show it is no longer practical or safe to do so.

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(3) Untrustworthiness of military officers: Mr. Hannon argues that, because military officers are subject to the UCMJ, they are somehow more vulnerable than civilians to legal sanctions for security violations. This is not valid. Civilians can also have top-secret clearance or higher and are subject to legal sanctions if they violate it. So would civilian jurors be in cases in which classified information was expected to be submitted as evidence. Civilian jurors, as Mr. Hannon must surely know, are routinely exposed to highly confidential (but not necessarily "classified") information (including one another's identities) that is seldom exposed. To say that we cannot trust any civilian jurors with classified information is equivalent to saying that the jury system is entirely bankrupt.

(4) My claim that "secret information would have to be made available to the defendants is likewise insupportable." Mr. Hannon says such information would "be made available only to the defendants' lawyers." In the first place, some defense lawyers in some terrorism and national security cases are no more trustworthy than the defendants and may be more dangerous; giving them access to classified information is tantamount to giving it to the terrorists themselves. Secondly, let's take the following, not unreasonable, hypothetical: The government claims that defendant Ahmed was a participant in a terrorist cell that plotted bombings. The defense wants to know what the evidence for the claim is. The evidence is the statement of a CIA informant in the terrorist cell whose identity cannot be exposed without endangering his life. Should defendant Ahmed be told the identity of the informant? If he isn't, how can he possibly defend himself? How could his lawyers know what Ahmed may know about the informant and his reliability? What if the informant is known to have a personal grudge against Ahmed, or is a notorious liar, or his mistakenly mixed Ahmed up with someone else? There simply is no way in which evidence from classified sources can be withheld from the actual defendant without risking and encouraging the most grotesque injustice.

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(5) "Our modern rules of evidence in criminal cases originated in the Warren Court." This is an absurd statement. Some rules of evidence (*e.g.*, the one on hearsay) go back a good bit further, but whenever they originated, they (including the much-modified *Miranda* rule) are now the rules under which all lawyers, judges, and the investigators who collect evidence are trained. To create new rules of evidence with which none of the above has any knowledge or experience is to invite chaos as well as injustice. To alter the rules simply to facilitate convictions is also grotesquely unjust.

(6) Washington's precedents: I do not understand how practices before the adoption of the Constitution can constitute precedents under it, at least as binding law governing life-and-death courtroom decisions. In any case, we are not now legally at war, despite all the rhetoric from the press and government, and, during Washington's time and in his circumstances there may have been no alternatives to military tribunals for some crimes. I made the reference to Washington's tribunals in the context of Judge Bork's citation of them, but Bork says nothing about who was tried, for what charges, or in which circumstances. I don't know either, but their relevance on grounds of logic alone is suspect.

(7) It is "not true," Mr. Hannon writes, that *Ex parte Milligan* says "the Constitution is not suspended in time of emergency." My source for my statement that "Justice David Davis wrote that the Constitution is not suspended in time of emergency and that it remains 'a law for rulers and people, equally in time of war and peace'" was drawn from the *Oxford Companion to the Supreme Court* (1992), a standard reference work: " . . . Justice David Davis emphasized that the Constitution was not suspended in time of emergency, eloquently noting that it was 'a law for rulers and people, equally in time of war and peace'" (p. 549). The point is that *Milligan* holds that military courts are not permissible when the civilian courts are open. Since September 11, the civilian courts have remained open, and no one disputes that. Therefore, military courts, especially secret ones, are not permissible.

(8) "Apparently Dr. Francis believes that only a formal declaration of war can change ordinary criminals into prisoners of war." Dr. Francis believes "ordinary criminals" cannot be changed into prisoners of war by any legal measure. He believes people who commit murder, robbery, hijacking, piracy, bombing, kidnapping, etc., are ordinary criminals who should be tried according to the same ordinary legal procedures regardless of their specific motives (greed, hatred, political or religious ideology). As I noted in the article, it may be permissible and necessary simply to shoot known terrorists on sight, and a campaign of clandestine assassinations of known terrorists and their leaders is what I would propose as the most effective means of destroying Al Qaeda. Those who authorize and carry out such a campaign must be prepared to accept the consequences if they assassinate the wrong people. Let us not, however, corrupt our constitutional and legal processes by staging phony "trials" in secret, under phony "rules of evidence"; such procedures would only damage what remains of our constitutional tradition far more severely than acquittal of suspected terrorists would, and they would eventually be invoked as "precedents" to prosecute American citizens, as Judge Bork has already demanded.

(9) "The solution is not to deny the government the use of a necessary and lawful means of defense because an unscrupulous person might abuse it in the future." This begs the question whether secret military tribunals are "necessary and lawful" at all and, secondly, this is precisely why we should be cautious about what government does in the name of law—because unscrupulous persons might abuse it in the future by citing it as "precedent." (Lincoln, Stanton, Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton—these are merely the most notoriously unscrupulous; leave aside the dumb and the well-meaning, such as Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan, or the merely ambitious, shallow, and thoughtless, such as George W. Bush, his father, and John Ashcroft.) If we are not concerned about such abuses, then consideration of what might become "precedents" is irrelevant.

(10) The American public may or may not be smart enough to understand what military tribunals are ostensibly being used for. The American public is probably a lot less smart today than it was in Lincoln's time, but it fell for quite a bit back then. How smart it will be in the future is anyone's guess, and how easily it can then be manipulated into condoning tyranny and injustice to its own citizens by "unscrupulous persons" through appeals to fear, greed, lust for power or for

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vengeance, phony patriotism, globalist ideology, thinly masked ethnic and religious prejudices, and other passions, I simply can't say. I leave it to Mr. Hannon to assure us that it can't happen here.

"What would be the impact," Mr. Hannon wonders, "if a patently guilty, mass-murdering Al Qaeda terrorist is set free on a *Miranda*-style technicality?" The impact is that he goes free, although if he is "patently guilty," I wonder why a civilian court of the kind that convicted McVeigh, Capone, *et al.*, can't convict him. If he's not "patently guilty" (which presumably means guilty beyond a reasonable doubt), then he should go free. Guilty people go free all the time, including mass murderers who held power in communist states and who have murdered far more people than Al Qaeda has. It is not a good thing for guilty people to go free, but that is a risk free societies ruled by law have to run. Somehow we survive the acquittals or non-prosecutions of O.J. Simpson, Jane Fonda, Bernardine Dohrn, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and many, many others who have blood on their hands. The point I tried to make in my article is that we can and do survive such miscarriages of justice. What we cannot and will not survive is the deliberate establishment of precedents that will be used—and may have actually been designed to be used—to erode our constitutional traditions even more than they already have been.

On Reprisal and Law

I read with interest Mark Royden Winchell's "When They Bare the Iron Hand" (*Vital Signs*, March). I do not dispute his account of the events of 1865, but in Article 1, Section 8, of the Constitution, Congress, not the president, is given the authority to grant letters of marque and reprisal. Current sensibilities no doubt cloud Mr. Winchell's memory.

Also, while my recollection of military law procedure may be faulty, the judge advocate, as I recall, was not "both prosecutor and judge." Rather, he was both prosecutor and defense counsel. He was, in fact, to be the professional lawyer in the proceedings and to remain neutral and assist both with the presentation of the case and with the defense. He was present because a panel of officers, who were laymen (non-lawyers), were the collegiate tribunal or judges, and he was to advise on the substantive and procedural law. Military law derives its procedures from Roman, not common, law.

—Duane L.C.M. Galles
Minneapolis, MN

Dr. Winchell Replies:

I thank Mr. Galles for his thoughtful response to my article. In order to avoid confusion, I should have said that the Constitution granted Congress the power to direct the president to issue letters of marque and reprisal. I certainly would not favor allowing the Commander in Chief to operate unilaterally in this area.

If Mr. Galles is correct in his description of the role of the judge advocate, then this is another respect in which the trial of the Lincoln conspirators violated established procedure. According to Guy W. Moore's *The Case of Mrs. Surratt* Gen. Thomas Ewing argued against convening a military tribunal against the conspirators because "the joint duties of the judge advocate made him prosecutor and judge at a military trial." Ewing also noted that "the judge advocate had received the reports of detectives, pre-examined witnesses, prepared and signed the charges, and that he controlled the admission and rejection of the evidence before the court. Yet, in a civil court, a judge who had heard the client's story could not sit on the trial lest he be partial." In any event, the trial of the Lincoln conspirators was more of an inquisition than a criminal proceeding governed by constitutional safeguards and the tradition of common law.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

PALESTINIAN . . . Lutherans? To many American Christians following the conflict in the Holy Land, this moniker sounds as oxymoronic as the more general "Palestinian Christians." American evangelical end-times buffs—and their number is legion—simply cannot admit, as they attempt to match daily news items with chapter and verse from Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, the fact that many Palestinians are not Muslims but fellow Christians. Some of these indigenous residents of the contested region—and their number is growing—even adhere to what Gene Edward Veith calls "the way of the first Evangelicals": Lutheranism.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan (and Palestine)—the ELCJ—traces its roots back to the 1898 founding of the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Jerusalem by German missionaries and Palestinian converts to Christianity. Located a mere hundred yards from the traditional site of Christ's still-empty tomb, Redeemer is the seat of the ELCJ's bishop, Munib A. Younan.

Overall, the ELCJ boasts 2,000 members in six congregations located in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beir Sahour, and Amman, Jordan. Each congregation has a school, and Jerusalem's Redeemer Lutheran supports the Augusta Victoria Hospital, located on the Mount of Olives for over 50 years.

Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem is a center of evangelical activity. In addition to the church itself ("near where the Word became Flesh"), the hillside campus includes the International Center of Bethlehem (Dar al-Nadwa), which has grown from a safe house for persecuted Palestinian refugees in 1948 to a cultural and intellectual center for the development of understanding between Palestinian Christians and Muslims, who have peacefully coexisted in the region for centuries. The campus also houses the Dar al-Kalima Academy, a thriving school that welcomes Palestinians of any religious and economic background, as well as Jews, to learn Christian teachings and language and vocational skills. The Health and Wellness Center and the new home of the Academy—whose construction was funded primarily by Wheat Ridge Ministries, an American Lutheran charity bankrolled by both the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—was scheduled to open in early May, on land donated by Yasser Arafat to the Christmas Lutheran Church. Arafat, according to the Wheat Ridge website (*www.wheatridge.org/beth_2.htm #B1*), understood the need of citizens of Bethlehem for educational and healthcare opportunities.

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Today, after several days of violent attacks at the hands of the Israeli Defense Force, the center is in shambles.

In early March, after invading Bethlehem (which is controlled by the Palestinian Authority), the IDF began to besiege the compound, damaging buildings and forcing the school to close, according to a March 11 press release from the ELCA News Service (*www.wfn.org/2002/03/msg00087.html*). Church attendance quickly dropped off, since parishioners feared for their safety. IDF snipers took up positions surrounding the International Center.

After a tentative withdrawal and brief respite near the end of March, the IDF reentered Bethlehem on April 2, in a line of tanks, bulldozers, and troops, observes Dr. Mary E. Jensen, a Methodist who lives in Bethlehem, according to the Christmas Lutheran Church's website (*www.annadwa.org/attack/storty_invasion.htm*). Soldiers stormed the Lutheran compound, riddling windows and doors with bullets. An Israeli tank punctured the northeast wall of the school. The IDF ransacked the newly constructed Health and Wellness facility, destroying phone lines and computers and defacing the gardens and walkways. Israeli soldiers spraypainted hateful graffiti in Hebrew over the walls of several classrooms and desecrated Christian artwork composed by students of the school. Crosses and crucifixes that once adorned doorways and walls lay shattered on the floor. Trees surrounding the compound were also destroyed, as Israeli tanks rolled over them.

Worse, two days later, the Rev. Mitri Raheb, pastor of the Christmas Lutheran Church, was held at gunpoint and threatened for two hours while he was led about the compound and forced to watch more of the destruction—including the ransacking of his office and files.

"Get out! This is a church!" cried the pastor from a second-story balcony, as IDF soldiers stormed the doors of the compound. Readily identifiable in his clerical garb, the vigilant minister rushed down to meet the soldiers, after placing an S.O.S. call to his bishop in Jerusalem. The Israeli commander claimed that they needed to inspect a home that lay outside the church compound. When Raheb pointed out that this house was well outside the church's land, he was ignored.

While watching the IDF destroy his office, Pastor Raheb was able to answer a telephone call from Bishop Younan, who was desperate to know what was going on. When Raheb replied to Younan in Arabic, the situation escalated. "I believe they thought I was an expatriate pastor until they heard me speaking in Arabic and realized I was Palestinian," said Raheb. Wrestling the telephone from him, the soldiers screamed at him, "Now you are detained. Don't talk." He was then berated by a gaggle of soldiers who barraged him with insults and obscene words, cursing all Arabs and threatening him.

The soldiers led him to his home, where, in the presence of his terrified wife and children, he was ordered to retrieve the keys to the new school and fitness building. While he was outside, some people in the street shouted that the IDF had planted mines in the streets outside the compound and that some had already been detonated. The IDF commander blithely nodded.

Reporters briefly gathered outside the compound, but when they shouted questions to Pastor Raheb, they were driven from the vicinity, and Raheb was forbidden to speak to them.

Though unharmed, Pastor Raheb and his family were, as of mid-April, unsure of the extent of the damage to the compound, since warnings of IDF snipers remaining in position around the compound have kept parishioners from inspecting the scene.

Fear of snipers, sadly, is nothing particularly new for members of the ELCJ, who, in the fall of 2000, witnessed an IDF takeover of the Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem, as Israelis used it as a firing post against rock-throwing Palestinian protesters below. In August 2001, the IDF acted similarly at the Beit Jala Church of the Reformation, firing on young Palestinian men from the church's rooftop.

On April 7, shortly after the IDF's attack on the Lutheran church in Bethlehem, Israeli troops stormed another West Bank ELCJ congregation, the Lutheran Church of Hope in Ramallah. A press release from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (*www.lcms.org/news/2002_021.html*) indicated that the pastor was "reportedly . . . used by Israeli soldiers 'as a human shield' as they searched the church complex, room by room." Having torn apart refrigerators and desks, Israeli soldiers found no ammunition or bombs in the church.

Pastor Raheb remains vigilant in answering his vocation to preach the Gospel and care for the needs of his people. "We are here and we will remain here," he told Wheat Ridge Ministries. "Nothing will be able to stop us witnessing to the Lord of life. In these Easter days, this is our conviction."

Still, questions remain in the minds of Christmas Lutheran Church members Dr. Nuha Khoury and Viola Raheb, who were told to stay clear of the school by the compound's guard, Jawad Abed Al Jawad, recently released from the Deheisha Refugee Camp in Bethlehem. "These acts of vandalism," they said, "by the fourth strongest army in the world make us wonder what is so offensive about the Dar al-Kalima School, which our students have so proudly decorated with writings and artworks that talk about non-violence, peace, and dialogue between peoples? . . . Why is this hatred for places of beauty?"

I'm not sure Jack Van Impe, Pat Robertson, or any of the myriad others who believe God has given Israel the right to occupy this land by any means, fair or foul, would have an answer for those earnest and sincere questions. Fortunately, they won't be troubled by them, since the American media refuse to report on these acts of terrorism against a defenseless, irenic, and Christian people living in the very "House of Bread" that gave birth to the Bread of Life. "The bread," said Jesus, "that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:51). When will American Christians recognize their brothers who share their commitment to this truth?

—Aaron D. Wolf

JEAN-MARIE LE PEN's success in the first round of France's presidential election—he came in second and faced President Jacques Chirac in the final round—fell far short of a "revolution," despite the right's wishful thinking. The number of votes in his favor has risen only slightly since 1995, and the rout of the Socialists was primarily caused by the disunity of the left and by the arrogant odiousness of Lionel Jospin, the Socialist prime minister and presidential candidate who has now retired from politics. Even with the votes of his former ally Bruno Megret, Le Pen could not come close to becoming France's president on May 5.

Le Pen's relative success nevertheless indicates that he has tapped into resonant sources of grievance and concern. Many Europeans worry about immigration,

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crime, and the loss of cultural identity, and they feel alienated from the dominant postnational establishment. France is ten-percent Muslim today, and one third of her newborn babies are Arab, not French. Her classrooms have been turned into laboratories for multicultural experimentation, and her working-class suburbs are ruled by immigrant gangs that are every bit as violent as their counterparts in East L.A. or Brixton.

Faced with such issues, mainstream politicians run for cover—either because they don't have a view, or because they have politically correct opinions that they know are still largely unpopular among the ruled, or because they are in tune with the silent majority but fear appearing racist. They say nothing, they do even less, and they pay the price. The upset in France thus fits in with the backlash against the left's near-monopoly of power in Europe that was cracked by Silvio Berlusconi's victory in Italy last year. The resurgent CDU in Germany—and its sister CSU in Bavaria—makes the prospect of a massive center-right comeback across the Rhine almost imminent.

The reaction from the French establishment between the two rounds of voting was predictable: Le Pen became the latest Hitler-of-the-week, a grave threat to civilization as we know it, symbolized by the euro, multiculturalism, the Common Agricultural Policy, and "tolerance." "*Non*!" screamed the front page of the leftist *Libération*. The talking heads agreed that Le Pen voters needed reeducation and therapy. Chirac even declared that he would refuse to take part in the traditional presidential campaign debate with Le Pen: "I do not want this election to be confiscated by obscurantism, hatred and contempt. I do not want the French nation to yield to the giddiness of fear. This has been a combat all my life, in the name of morality and a certain idea of France," he declared with his usual bombast.

That "certain idea of France" is a phrase coined by Charles de Gaulle, and, in its original meaning, it would apply more aptly to Le Pen than any of his opponents. Chirac's kidnapping of De Gaulle's legacy was dishonest but essential to his strategy, which had to throw a bone to the old right. He could take support from the mainstream left for granted: the loathing of the hoary, old Front National leader and everything he stands for—authority, patriotism, self-reliance, discipline, law and order, traditional values—had scared the French ruling elite and forced it to gather around Chirac. Paradoxically, the resulting strong mandate for the president paved the way for another seven years of the soft, center-right presidency—and this outcome is least likely to favor the real right.

This is counterintuitive but unsurprising: Those described by Le Pen as belonging to the "corrupt, cosmopolitan oligarchy" that runs France have more in common with each other, regardless of their political affiliation, than with the rest of their countrymen.

The good news for America is that Europe's shift to the right makes its opposition to U.S. "benevolent global hegemony" more likely than under the assorted "Third Way" *apparatchiki*; who have dominated Europe for a decade. Only by reasserting its independence in foreign affairs can Europe help President Bush resist the rampaging interventionists who have become far too powerful for anyone's good.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

"WE AMERICANS" (a euphemism for the ruling class) probably learned something from Vietnam. Since that disastrous war, imperial military expeditions have been conducted somewhat differently: Bomb the barbarians into submission from the air rather than try to win their hearts and minds for democracy on the ground. It may be that we haven't heard the final word on the long-term viability of this new approach, however.

As has been often said, getting into Afghanistan is easy. Getting *out* is the hard part. And, as far as I know, there are as yet no missiles smart enough to identify and wipe out terrorists without intelligence on the ground and subsequent mop-ups.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's unveiling a few weeks back of the new color-coded terrorism warning system (different intensities from yellow to red to indicate the increasing degree of threat to Americans) made me wonder how much "we" really learned from Vietnam after all. Life imitates art. Was anyone else besides me instantly reminded of the wonderful 1970's movie *Go Tell the Spartans*?

In the early days of the Vietnam War, Burt Lancaster and a small group of fighting soldiers were stuck at an isolated outpost that was governed by a color-coded panel, devised by rear-echelon whiz kids, which was supposed to show the intensity of enemy activity. Of course, it was absurd and disastrous.

The film was a perfect satire of what happens when the waging of war, an art, is controlled by robotic Detroit technocrats. Shades of Robert McNamara! Has he been reincarnated as Rumsfeld? Then we really have learned nothing. Rumsfeld has, on several other occasions, shown himself the master of gifted military thinking, as when he reported that "Afghan air defenses still pose a threat to the United States." He also told the American people, concerning Osama bin Laden: "He is either in Afghanistan, or another country, or dead."

But, alas, Rumsfeld is only a stand-in for his chief, the President, whose calls to the people in the matter of terrorism have not exactly been clarion. Eloquence is not everything, but you can hardly have true leadership in a great crisis without it. For eloquence is nothing more than clear thinking expressed in language well designed for those who need to be led. The imprecise, empty, platitudinous, trivial, ill-fitted, contradictory, and, yes, robotic, statements with which the President has declared and described both our enemies and our war might lead us to fear a lack of clear thinking at the source.

—*Clyde Wilson*

OBITER DICTA: Mark your calendars now for the 13th Annual Meeting of the **John Randolph Club**, to be held on the banks of the Rock River at Cliffbreakers River Suites in Rockford, Illinois, October 4-5, 2002. Watch *Chronicles* and *www.ChroniclesMagazine.org* for details.

Our poet this month is **Catharine Savage Brosman** of New Orleans, Louisiana. Her poetry and prose have appeared in the *New England Review*, the *American Scholar*, the *Southwest Review*, the *Southern Review*, and the *Sewanee Review*, among others. A new collection of her verse, *The Muscled Truce*, featuring four poems that have appeared in *Chronicles*, will be published next year by LSU Press.

This month's art is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and he attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe.

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by Thomas Fleming

Turn Left at the Renaissance

Siena is almost entirely a city of the later Middle Ages. The days of glory—artistic as well as political—were the 13th and 14th centuries, and by the time the city was absorbed by the Medici empire in 1552, it was already a place of memories, whose people were ridiculed by the Florentines (in Dante's phrase) as a *vana gente*—a silly and inconsequential people who wasted their efforts searching for a mysterious underground river that would bring prosperity to an arid land. Siena was hopelessly old-fashioned. If Florentine art looked forward to the sensuality and paganism of California, Siena was resolutely reactionary, lingering in a twilight of the Christian age, when an icon of Mary was still felt to be a photographic likeness.

Walking through Siena's magnificent cathedral in March, I was asked to explain the presence of pagan Sibyls in the *pavimento*. I palmed off the usual answer that, in the Renaissance, the Sibyls were regarded as pagan prophets who foretold the coming of Christ. Fortunately, I was not asked *why* the spurious Sibylline literature was accepted as genuine, much less why there was also a tribute to Hermes Trismegistus that included a quotation from the Hermetic corpus. What, indeed, is this twaddle doing in a Christian church, especially here in Siena?

The writings that go under the name of Hermes Trismegistus (or Thoth Thrice-Great) were believed to go back to the age of the pharaohs. In some accounts, Hermes was a contemporary of Moses (in others, there are three incarnations of Hermes), but unlike the Hebrew author of the Pentateuch, the Egyptian not only foresaw the Incarnation but provided the inspiration for all Greek philosophy, from Pythagoras to Plato to Plotinus. The Christianized rhetorician Lactantius, writing in the Age of Constantine to reassure pagans that Christians were not so bizarre as they seemed, held up Hermes Trismegistus as the prime example of the convergence of pagan and Christian wisdom. Augustine, accepting the Hermetic texts at face value, believed that they were genuine prophecy—so genuine that they could only have been inspired by demons.

Augustine (true to his style of biblical exposition) was wrong on the facts but right on the interpretation. The Hermetic corpus, so far from being Egyptian wisdom handed down from the builders of the pyramids, was concocted by superstitious Greek writers of the second and third centuries A.D. The authors, with their smattering of Plato and Plotinus and their familiarity with translations of the Old Testament and the Gospels, had little difficulty in appearing to be the font of all wisdom. It is the dream of many an adolescent to go back in time, like Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee. How fun it would be to pass myself off as a god who could invent electricity and predict the outcome of battles. With the benefit of hindsight, even the slow-witted authors of the Hermetic corpus could appear to be prescient or even wise.

Augustine, though wrong on the date, was close to the mark in assuming that the inspiration for such a work could only be demonic. On the surface, Hermes' account of the Creation and Fall of man might sound like the Jewish and Christian story, but Frances Yates, in her magnificent book on Giordano Bruno, points out the stunning differences. The Egyptian Adam is divine, on a level with the demiurge or *logos*, and he falls from grace only because he falls in love with the earthly nature he has helped to create. Only a fool (such as Lactantius) or a liar (such as the Florentine "priest" Marsilio Ficino) could confuse this Gnostic babble with the sober poetry of Genesis.

The writers who composed the works of "Hermes Trismegistus" are part of a larger movement that represents one pagan response to the Christian challenge. The Neoplatonist Iamblichus betrays a similar obsession with pseudo-Egyptian mysteries and astrological gibberish, and the emperor Julian, who attempted to invent a formal pagan religion, made himself ridiculous with his proto-Masonic ceremonies in which he drenched himself with blood as if he were a common butcher. As time wore on, Neoplatonism would become synonymous with the ongoing effort of neopagans to come up with a substitute for a religion that claimed to have a monopoly on truth and imposed a rigid moral code that hedonists found intolerable.

We can see this neopaganism popping up from time to time, especially in the Byzantine Empire, where learned men could actually read the texts of Plato, Plotinus, and their degenerate successors, but in both sides of Christendom, the Church effectively squelched the conspiracy. In the West, Catholics were able to preserve their sanity by following "the solider Aristotle," but even in the Byzantine East, with its marked preference for mysticism, theologians who preferred Plato were kept on the straight and narrow path by the restrictions of Orthodox theology. There were undoubtedly witches, magi, and neopagan intellectuals scattered throughout the Christian world, but we hear very little of them until the 15th century.

The revival of magic and superstition has many sources, but in the Middle Ages, the primary conduit was the Muslim world. Arabic scholars took a deep interest in both the Jewish cabala and the Hermetic corpus, and it is no accident that so many terms in alchemy and so many demons invoked by magi have Arabic names. In some sense the court of Frederick II in Sicily—with its Muslim, Jewish, and freethinking intellectuals—might be likened to an international congress of anti-Christian mystics. Small wonder that its cultural accomplishments are so often regarded as an anticipation of the Renaissance.

In the early 13th century, however, this imperial *Stupor Mundi* was definitely an exotic among the German barons and Ghibeline cities of Tuscany that supported him in his (legitimate) struggle with the pope. It was in the late 13th century that Siena's city fathers built their *palazzo pubblico* and decided on a plan (which they did not execute) to triple the size of the cathedral that they had constructed between the 12th and the 14th centuries. The cathedral's first façade was the work of the master of Pisan gothic art, Giovanni Pisano, who also carved the pulpit. Duccio's great *Maesta* (the Virgin enthroned in glory) was the altarpiece, and Simone Martini painted many of his greatest masterpieces for the

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cathedral and other churches and pubic buildings in his hometown.

Simone is the most charming of the Sienese masters, and, while he was in Avignon, his painting won the heart of Petrarch, who asked him to paint a portrait of Laura and to do a cover for his magnificent folio of Vergil. Like Simone, Petrarch was a man in two worlds. His deep studies in Latin had given him a genuinely historical perspective on the ancient world, and his revulsion against the technicalities of scholastic philosophy set the tone for the entire humanist movement in the centuries to come, but unlike many later humanists, Petrarch was a devout Christian, and he displayed little interest in the ancient magical or mystical writings that were available in the late 13th century. Petrarch's lack of interest in magic would also prove to be a typical attitude of later humanists who wished to put their skills in Latin, rhetoric, and rational inquiry at the service of the broader communities to which they belonged, whether Florence, England, or the Catholic Church. Humanists were often religious skeptics or, at least, critics of the Church, but neither Petrarch nor his successors evinced much enthusiasm for black magic, and it was Isaac Casaubon, one of the last of the great Renaissance humanists, who debunked the writings of Hermes Trismegistus as a late forgery.

Alongside this largely wholesome so-called "civic" humanism, however, there also grew up in Florence another tradition that used its training in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew not to serve the city or the Church but to advance the goals of what they sometimes called the *prisca theologia*, the ancient and original theology that supposedly antedates Christian and most Hebrew Scriptures. While it is just possible that Marsilio Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and their Medici patrons remained (at least, in their own minds) Christian, they seem to have regarded Christianity as valid only insofar as it converged with Hermes, Iamblichus, and (in Pico's case) the Jewish cabala.

Cosimo de Medici, the founder of the family's empire over Florence, was a type familiar through the ages. Although he had devoted his life to business and politics and displayed no sign of literary talent or humane learning, he wanted to be more than just a patron of artists and writers. He wanted to be taken seriously as a man of learning and ideas. Such bourgeois gentlemen are always easy prey for the ideological confidence men who create and lead movements of every type. Cosimo's big opportunity to carve out a niche for himself came during the Council of Florence in 1439, when he met the neopagan Greek philosopher George Gemistus Plethon and Plethon's disciple Bessarion, later a cardinal in the Roman Church.

Plethon's friends and disciples were not kept in the dark forever about his contempt for Christianity, and though intellectual historians have written as if neither Cosimo nor his protégé Ficino (nor even—and this is incredible—Bessarion) knew what the old boy was up to, there is no way they could *not* have known. Despite the evidence, few scholars have been willing to "come clean" on the Platonic Academy that Ficino set up under old Cosimo's patronage. Despite Ficino's perfunctory references to Christianity (and his fear of Savonarola), the Academy was nothing less than the first state-sponsored institution designed to overturn Christianity and replace it with a rationalist religion based on the pseudo-platonist mumbo jumbo that eventually became Freemasonry. It is unfortunate that some worthy successor to Dante could not have found the appropriate circle of Hell to put them all in, including Bessarion.

Cosimo's grandson Lorenzo kept up the tradition, and in reading the poetry of Lorenzo and his friends, you might think you were in Alexandria or Rome in the age of Catullus. But Catullus lived and wrote in ignorance of Christianity. The nymphs and goddesses of Florentine art and literature are not an evocation of the truly classical past, and if Botticelli's *Venus* can be said to resemble his Madonnas, the reverse can also be said—and with greater truth. The little goat feet of the all those charming Pans and satyrs may hint at the identity of the god Lorenzo and his friends really worshiped.

By the 1480's, when the *pavimento* in Siena was being constructed, all of Tuscany had fallen under Florentine and, therefore, neopagan influence. This neopaganism is everywhere on display in the frankly pagan sensuality of Lorenzo de Medici and his court, the obsession with erotic paintings; the famous lecture on the dignity of man delivered by Pico della Mirandola. This oration, which is universally treated as the highest expression of Renaissance idealism, begins with a quotation from Hermes Trismegistus and reeks of Pico's obsession with black magic. From this perspective (and, let me be clear, there are others), it is not entirely unfair to regard the Medici's cultural project as an attempt to transform Christian Florence into ancient Athens and the Catholic Church into an institution teaching Neoplatonist philosophy with the kind of "members-only" privileges that turned the Vatican, under the Medici pope Leo X, into a highbrow version of the Playboy Club. For them, the great Christian civilization of the 12th and 13th centuries—the age of Aquinas, Dante, and Gothic architecture—was not a Golden Age to be studied and admired but a barbaric Dark Age that was best forgotten.

The Florentine Renaissance was not a new beginning but the beginning of the end for our civilization. The Middle Ages might have flowered into a higher civilization that was both classical and Christian, but, instead, it was torn down by cultural vandals who, despite their pretensions, were neither. The Medici were unprincipled scoundrels who degenerated from one generation to another until their last representative, Gian Gastone, spent his career as grand duke wallowing drunk in bed and vicariously enjoying the obscene sexual antics of the young hoodlums with whom he surrounded himself. They destroyed the liberty of the Tuscan republics and fostered the degeneration of Italian art into the vivid debaucheries that are so admired by art historians. Pope Leo X could not take time away from his paintings and mistresses to curtail the abuses within the Church that were being denounced by a certain German Augustinian beginning to make a name for himself. It was in Medicean Florence (and in other great cities taken over by thugs) that the Christian civilization of the Middle Ages was overturned and that great movement of Western self-hatred was set in motion, when real Europe was displaced by the imaginary Egypt and, afterward, the imaginary Chinas, Africas, and Native Americas that have poisoned the West.

Read Thomas Fleming's
HARD Right
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Sweet Olive

Catharine Savage Brosman

Walking back from dinner at Commander's Palace
in June's profusion, my English guests have paused
beside the cemetery gate, enchanted at the statuary
and the shadows as they shift among the dwellings
of the dead. Wisps also of my mind home in—bees,

charmed by the honeyed pull of nothingness. Still
roseate, clouds wind-combed to angel hair drift on
downriver, and there is rustling in the oaks—a bird,
a restless limb, a spirit wandering, dreams perhaps,
damp and heavier than breath. A few steps, finally,

a laugh dispel the sorcery. Again we stop, attracted
by perfumes that mingle in the moist and pulsing air
of the Louisiana summer night: the languorous odor
of Cape jasmine in a cypress planter, deadly oleander,
honeysuckle in cascades along a wall of mossy brick,

and then the branches of sweet olive bending down
as if to be admired, their waxen foliage luminous,
their milky blossoms soft and sensual as ringlets
in a Botticelli painting. As we amble on, we speak
of paradise imagined: Persian poetry, the garden

of the Rose, a cloistered fountain with the music
of its arches and the deepest heaven mirrored. Oh,
the feasting of desire on its vision!—wine, ambrosia,
melody, sweet olive by a wall, and a beloved form
embraced. Or will we be as shades more immaterial

than a conceit of figures dancing through the trees
at dawn, like Spanish moss, who vanish in the sun,
or fireflies that flit across sidereal lawns, a moment
visible, then drawn by greater darkness, greater light
of stars yet farther out, still brighter, still unknown?

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by Philip Jenkins

The Crime of Consistency

When future generations write the history of the Roman Catholic Church in North America, the year 2002 will loom large, since the crisis over child abuse by priests and other clergy has had such a devastating effect on the faithful. Yet these same events also deserve to be remembered as marking a remarkable new low in the already none-too-estimable record of the American mass media. Newspaper and television reporters covering the crisis have repeatedly indulged in a double standard so blatant that it is amazing they have not been challenged openly. What the media have done, in short, is to denounce as monsters and fiends those men who have sex with teenage boys, but only if the men customarily wear a clerical collar. If the perpetrators are laymen, then exactly the same behavior is laudable, desirable, and thoroughly progressive.

Ever since the abuse crisis erupted in Boston in January, it has been apparent that the much-hyped term "pedophile priest" is fatally flawed. The notorious Father Geoghan was indeed a pedophile—a man sexually interested in prepubescent children—and some other cases of this sort have turned up. Yet such individuals account for only a tiny fraction of sexual misconduct cases involving clergy. If there is a "typical" clergy abuse case, it involves a cleric sexually active with a young person aged between 15 and 17, more commonly a boy than a girl. The act may be criminal as well as immoral, and it undoubtedly involves a disastrous violation of trust, but it is not pedophilia. In many instances, it is not even criminal: In Massachusetts, scene of some of the worst scandals, the age of consent is 16.

When a man has consensual sex with a 17-year-old boy, we normally refer to the act as homosexuality rather than pedophilia or child abuse. In the media reporting of clergy cases, however, we always hear of molestation and abuse: In one Cleveland case, the *New York Times* told the story of a clergyman involved in "sexually abusing a 16-year-old boy." In one of the more notorious cases in California, a diocese paid out several million dollars because a priest had allegedly had sex with a 17-year-old male pupil in a Catholic high school. News stories generally spoke freely of the act as "molestation," and the youth as a "victim." In general discussion, even that case is wrongly categorized together with instances of "priestly pedophilia."

To stress that many instances of clerical misconduct involve what should properly be called homosexuality is not to minimize or excuse the activities. Even if we assume that homosexuality should be treated as legally equivalent to heterosexual conduct, it is difficult to speak of full consent when there is such a grotesque imbalance of power and authority between the partners. Moreover, the priest is certainly breaching an assumed bond of trust, in addition to his clerical vows. Looking at media coverage, we might initially feel heartened at the impressive desire to enforce sexual standards, to defend vulnerable young Americans from hedonistic pederasts.

And our response would be totally wrong. For a quarter-century now, the media have systematically responded with total approval to relationships of this sort in cases not involving clergy—for instance, when the older partner is a nonclerical authority figure, such as a teacher or coach. In recent years, novels about youth homosexuality and teenage coming-out have proliferated, usually treating the subject very sympathetically, and often portraying an intergenerational relationship as a kind of "initiation." Words like "molestation" and "victim" are never used in such a secular context, except by the novel's unsympathetic characters, the homophobic yahoos.

This perspective is reflected when the books are reviewed by mainstream media, which normally advocate zero tolerance for any such offense involving a priest. In one recent review, the *New York Times* enthused about a "beautifully acted film about an introspective 18-year-old boy's homosexual initiation." Another reviewer in the same paper responds to Sylvia Brownrigg's book *Pages For You*, which tells the story of a relationship between a 17-year-old girl and a female teacher. This is portrayed as an "age-old story of first love and sexual initiation," "a gay love affair."

In some instances, the benevolent interpretation of gay "initiation" is applied to people much younger than the 16- or 17-year-olds who commonly feature in clergy abuse cases. In 2000, the *Los Angeles Times* reviewed Gavin Lambert's *Mainly About Lindsay Anderson*, recording that, "since [Lambert's] sexual initiation at age eleven with a teacher at his preparatory school, he has felt only 'gratitude' for realizing his homosexuality." In the *New York Times*, film critic Stanley Kauffmann notes in matter-of-fact terms that, "When Lambert was a schoolboy of 11, a teacher initiated him." The lack of critical comment in this instance is amazing, as is the failure to place quotation marks around "initiation." Others would choose much, much, harsher words.

Even in such a grossly exploitative context, journalists feel a need to avoid condemning alternative forms of sexuality. When clergy are involved, though, they assume a stern moralism. The contradictions are obvious. Only in a clerical context are the media prepared to launch very traditional assaults on homosexuality and pederasty. It is equally incongruous to read so many media accounts of priestly "perversion," a word that for many years since has not been commonly applied to homosexual relations.

Judith Levine's recent book *Harmful To Minors* suggests that a relationship between a priest and a youth "conceivably" could be positive for both parties. Many considered her remarks shocking and insensitive, and I personally think she was dead wrong. But at least she showed honesty in going beyond the hypocritical double standard that prevails in the media. Levine had committed the unpardonable crime of consistency in the first degree.

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Socialist Realism from Giotto to Warhol

by Andrei Navrozov

H. Ward Sterett

In the 1960's, a fashionable subject of conversation among the Russian intelligentsia was Mikhail Sholokhov's plagiarism. Sholokhov, it was alleged, had found the manuscript of *And Quiet Flows the Don* among the personal effects of a certain Cossack, published it as his own, and eventually pocketed the 1965 Nobel Prize for Literature. Just look at that amazing novel, our sleuths were saying, and compare it with the stuff the man *really* wrote, propagandist rubbish like *Virgin Soil*.

Yet Sholokhov had began publishing his tales of Cossack life in the early 1920's, and his epic of the River Don belonged to the epoch. The rubbish he started writing in the 1930's, and continued publishing until his death in 1984, belonged to the Union of Soviet Writers, together with all the rubbish that everyone else in Stalin's Russia, including the supposedly irrepressible and otherworldly Pasternak, had begun to write. So, in accusing him of dishonesty, our sleuths were missing the point completely, rather like a person who would assert that the ancient Maya had plagiarized their temples *'cos just look at dem injuns now, they ain't building that kind of crazy stuff no more in Guatemala.*

The fact was that, like Sholokhov's generation and the still earlier generation of Pasternak, our sleuths—that is to say, the intelligentsia of the 1960's—had become barbarized themselves, degenerating intellectually to the point where the only thought they could afford to entertain was that "socialist realism" was a bad thing. They could no longer recognize the finer details in the total picture of cultural propaganda, pressing as it did on their collective brain like a malignant tumor. Making subtle distinctions, at that point in their lives, would have been tantamount to realizing just how far they themselves had fellow-traveled down that rubbish-strewn road to mediocrity. For it was of their journey that the young Pasternak had written prophetically: "O life, our name is dispersal."

I recount this somewhat autobiographical parable, which, on the face of it, has little to do with the history of art, for a couple of reasons. First, I think we should ask ourselves: If, in the course of a mere half-century, the intellectual elite of a nation can so lose the plot and reveal itself to be quite so incapable of understanding what has gone on a mere generation earlier, what hope have we today—five, eight, or ten centuries after all the great cataclysms in religion, taste, and art had revolutionized and re-revolutionized the world 20 times over—to understand the difference between a giftless propagandist, a talented hack impelled by his worldly appetites, and a selfless genius on his way to the poorhouse? And secondly, I think we need to ask: Is the history of art a knowable chain of causes and effects—very much like our customary view of world history—or is it a series of unrelated, self-contained, apodictic episodes that every generation of historically minded people links together *ex post facto*, each in its own self-serving way, to form a reassuringly rational, ego-preserving logical progression?

Ordinarily I would not bother with such lofty questions. But, as we have seen, my autobiographical parable foreshadows the answers.

Last year, a renowned and not altogether untalented British painter named David Hockney published a book entitled *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters.* Coming from a California-based artist of fashionably am-

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biguous sexuality and impeccably modernist credentials, the richly illustrated volume created a huge stir. In the words of the dust-jacket blurb, Hockney "examines the major works of art history and reveals the truth of how artists such as Caravaggio, Velazquez, van Eyck, Holbein, Leonardo and Ingres used mirrors and lenses to help them create their famous masterpieces." Or, in Hockney's own words,

> The thesis I am putting forward here is that from the early fifteenth century many Western artists used optics—by which I mean mirrors and lenses (or a combination of the two)—to create living projections. . . . Many art historians have argued that certain painters used the camera obscura in their work—Canaletto and Vermeer, in particular, are often cited—but, to my knowledge, no one has suggested that optics were used as widely or as early as I am arguing here.

What I want to take note of at this juncture is the subsequent fate of Hockney's thesis, which haunts me as a kind of nightmarish echo of the Russian intelligentsia's obsession with Sholokhov's plagiarism. For here is a typical representative of the *Western* intelligentsia at its best, engaged in fruitful and informed debate with his peers—art scholars, museum curators, and historians of science—and not one voice in this otherwise lively chorus will descant upon the sad truth that they are all missing the point. Indeed, it is as though some malignant tumor, pressing down on their collective brain, prevents them from glimpsing the landscape of fundamental issues that lies just beyond the "sensational discoveries" under discussion. Could it be that glimpsing it would be tantamount to realizing just how far Western culture—the culture whose handlers and caretakers, if not heirs and successors, they surely are—has progressed along the road to mediocrity and extinction?

Western cultural discourse has become so barbarized that the question of whether or not, or to what extent, the painters of the Renaissance employed certain optical tools in their work can now totally obscure the question of what it was that art ever sought to achieve, by whatever visual means, before, during, and after the Renaissance. All of us in the 20th century have been brought up on the didactic and clumsy fable of progress in everything, not excepting art. That broadly historical fable is based on evolutionary analogies, of which Darwinism, Marxism, and the history of locomotion and armaments are ready examples. A jet is faster than a turboprop, which is faster than a train, which is faster than a horse, which is faster than legs. Crossbows can kill, muskets can kill more, machine guns still more, and a hydrogen bomb can kill everybody.

According to the fable, in the Dark Ages that followed the fall of the Roman Empire, man's renewed struggle to represent nature—like his struggle to conquer it—went badly, then better, and then as well as was humanly possible. This culmination was the High Renaissance, its enduring achievements rather like the trains of today, still running on the rails first laid in Queen Victoria's time. Whereupon man spent a couple of centuries fooling around, experimenting with this, toying with that, and fiddling with a third thing, eventually arriving at the TGV stage in the evolution of Stephenson's locomotive. This was all to the good, however, and became known as Mannerism. Finally, as though realizing that once attained, the fundamental perfection of a Michelangelo or a Leonardo could not be surpassed by conventional means, he invented a sort of nuclear reactor of artistic expression, which is the Modern movement from the Impressionists to the present day.

In keeping with the accepted notion of progress without end, the moral of the fable was kept deliberately inconclusive, a warning to any pessimist T.S. Eliot types out there who "have heard the mermaids singing" that the opera ain't over, and that what is actually taking place is merely the conclusion of one glorious cycle and the start of another, potentially even more glorious but, at any rate, more advanced.

The barbarization of which I speak—a process of regressive metastasis in the thinking classes, where the ideology of progress plays the part that "socialist realism" played under the Soviet regime—has not always been so pandemic. To demonstrate this, I shall quote at some length from a once-famous book entitled *The Modern Movement in Art*, written by art historian R.H. Wilenski in 1926. A point Wilenski makes about Ingres, for instance,

> is that we see the influence of the daguerreotype in the technique of his last period and that thereby a twist was given to the naturalistic technique used by [many] derivative artists in the venal descriptive popular art which they evolved to meet the demands of the new French bourgeois created by the Revolution, and that it was the same twist as that which . . . led the English Pre-Raphaelites to the mistaken notion that the camera could completely and perfectly record forms, and that it was the artist's duty to rival the camera in purely mechanical non-selective vision.
>
> . . . Other French artists soon discovered that the camera's lens recorded not the generic character of physical objects and concrete things as perceived by representational descriptive artists, but that it recorded only effects of light; and by 1850 the French artists had started on attempts to contract their perception to the camera's true vision—attempts which were destined to debase pictorial technique in ways quite different from the way it was debased by artists who failed to understand the camera's eye.

And of the Impressionists:

> The Impressionists set out to evolve a species of painting in which specific forms would be suggested purely as the camera suggests them, by records of their effects in light. . . . [T]he celebrated palette of the Impressionists and the still more celebrated "pointilliste" method of breaking colours into their ingredients and allowing them to fuse at a certain distance to the desired tint, was in fact merely an attempt to evolve a system of colouring which it was thought would be that seen in photographs if the camera could record its vision of colour.

On the invention of photography, he is still more forceful:

> To-day everyone recognizes that the camera cannot comment; that it cannot select; and that the variation between the shortest time and the longest time which it can behold its "subject" is, in daylight, extremely limited. There are still, however, many people who imagine that

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the camera can record the forms of physical objects and concrete things, and the formal relations of such objects and things to one another.

Both these last activities are . . . as far beyond the camera's powers as the other activities just mentioned. The camera records degrees of light, obstructions to light, reflections of light and relations of light and shade. It cannot record a house, a tree, or a man. It can only record the momentary effects and degrees of light as affected by such physical objects and concrete things.

What emerges from Wilenski's pages is a deeply unflattering picture of the 19th century. More importantly, what emerges is a portrait of a scholar and thinker determined to see things in his own way and to look beyond the iron curtain that is the received wisdom of an epoch. And, if we measure the intellectual distance from such a man to a man like Hockney, we may find that it is exactly equal to the aesthetic distance between, say, Corot's middle period and the Coca-Cola photographism of Andy Warhol exactly one century later.

The hidden agenda of Hockney's *Secret Knowledge* is to exonerate photography, cinema, television, computer graphics, Warhol, conceptual art, and modern progressive literalism generally, by pointing to the past and co-opting the great masters from the 15th century to the 20th—they all did it, didn't they?—to advance the cause of the present. The open brief of Wilenski is to pour scorn on much of the century that preceded him, accusing its great masters of degeneracy and of betrayal precisely because they had embraced that cause and the very technology that Hockney now thinks he discovers America by identifying.

I want to take up the English writer's critical approach to the art of the 19th century to retreat still further into the past—sweeping like Stephenson's locomotive through the five centuries upon which Hockney bases his thesis—and to end up in the ages that, strangely enough, are called "dark." Is that because their artists used neither artificial light, nor theatrical illusion, nor computer enhancement to say what they wanted? Because, as we shall see, the true watershed in the development of Western art is not the artists' reliance on optics—nor even, more generally, on the aesthetic sensibility that the introduction of optics made commonplace—but another scientific development that had taken place even earlier. In the final analysis, it, too, had to do with the artists' use and abuse of light.

My guide through all that terrible darkness is Pavel Florensky. Along with his friend Vasily Rozanov, Father Florensky is among the most important Russian thinkers of any epoch, not just the 20th century. Like Rozanov, who died of hunger a few years after the Bolshevik coup, Florensky, an Orthodox priest, died the death of a martyr in the camps. Until recently, his name was practically unknown in the West. But when, a few years ago, an Italian publishing house brought out a translation of his book *Iconostasis*, it went through more than 20 printings and became a kind of highbrow bestseller. Here, I am going to draw on another essay of Florensky's, a work of unparalleled intellectual boldness that, as far as I know, has never been translated. Entitled *Inverted Perspective*, it was written in 1919.

People who look at icons are often struck by the oddness with which their authors treated perspective, which becomes particularly clear when the objects depicted are rectangular or flat-sided, such as houses, tables, or books, especially the often-seen Holy Scripture. In addition to the façade, for example, another two sides of the building will be shown; the Scripture will have three, and sometimes all four, of its cinnabar-colored sides turned to the viewer; a face will show all its features at once without foreshortening. So great is the violation of what are now thought to be elementary rules of perspective that the modern viewer cannot but conclude that the authors of these 13th-century masterpieces were pictorial illiterates.

Another way in which iconographers distorted perspective is by making it multicentered or multifocal, so that one part of the interior of a building, for instance, seems to have been seen from one person's point of view, another from a second person's, and yet another from a point of view apparently incompatible with the other two. The same approach is evident in the iconographer's treatment of light and shade, or *chiaroscuro*, as it is called in the West, which again seems self-contradictory, polyvalent, and lacking a single focus.

The modern spectator's reaction is that the authors of these works were *primitive* artists who had not yet progressed to the kind of mastery of their medium seen in Italian painting, for instance, as it begins to approach the Renaissance. Of course the modern spectator does not deny that these pictures are great, or wonderful, or important. After all, he has admired Balinese sculptures, and African carvings, and Australian cave paintings. Why should he not appreciate Byzantine or Russian icons? But he knows that deep down within himself is the sense that all this is the raw material of progress, to be reworked by Western civilization into something *definitive* and *correct*. Come the Renaissance, he reasons, all the errors will be set right, the good bits will stay and the silly stuff will be dropped, the boys will grow up to be men, and the lowly abacus will become our computer.

History and logic, alas, are not on the modern spectator's side. Florensky points out that, while the ancient Egyptian reliefs show no trace of perspective, the mathematician Moritz Cantor has written extensively (in *Vorlesungen uber Geschichte der Mathematik*, 1907) of the Egyptians' achievements in the study of geometric proportionality. "It simply never occurred to them," confirms Cantor, "to think of a pictorial image as a plane inserted between the eye and the object depicted, connecting by means of a straight line the points of intersection of that plane with light beams directed at that object."

It is equally unhistorical to suppose that the ancient Greeks, who did not use perspective in their painting, were ignorant of it. Florensky points out that Ptolemy, in his treatise on geography of the second century B.C., discusses the cartographic theory of the projection of a sphere upon a plane. Elsewhere, he discusses pole projection onto an equatorial plane, the kind that became known in the 17th century as "stereographic," and solves a variety of other complex problems of projection geometry. Is it conceivable, considering that the problems posed by representational painting are elementary by comparison, that Greek artists did not use perspective because there was no one to teach them how?

Geometry, after all, is a Greek word and practically a Greek invention. On the opening page of his treatise on perspective published in 1525 (*Instruction in the Means of Measurement*), Albrecht Dürer says that, as "profound Euclid" has already laid down the fundamentals of geometry, "what follows will prove quite superfluous to those familiar with them."

As it happens, it is to the Greek philosopher Anaxagoras (500-

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428 B.C.)—a kind of Galileo of his day, exiled from Athens for blasphemy, who professed that the sun was a white-hot stone and the moon was made of earth that reflected the sun's rays, a thinker whom even Aristotle criticized for his overly mechanistic view of the universe—that Vitruvius, the Roman writer on architecture and architect to Augustus, attributes the invention of perspective. Not for painting, mind you, or what we would call "pure" art, but for what we, after the Greeks, call "scenography," that is, the "applied" art of designing stage sets for the theater. According to Vitruvius, around 470 B.C., when Aeschylus was putting on his plays in Athens, the painter Agatharchus executed the set designs and published a commentary on them, whereupon, for the first time in history, Anaxagoras decided to address the whole question of geometric illusionism scientifically. Thus the threadlike line binding the spectator to the object was first drawn, the gossamer thread that, with the passing of time, would become an indestructible chain of truly totalitarian proportions.

Perspective, writes Florensky, did not emerge from pure art and, from the very start and by its very nature, sought to draw art away from its original function, suborning it and redirecting its energies to achieve its own applied ends. What was that original function? Whatever it was, it was not to mimic, reflect, or counterfeit reality, but to gain a deeper understanding of it. By contrast, an artfully decorated theater set aims to falsify reality, to replace the substantial with the make-believe. In other words, a theater set is conceived as a *fiction*, whereas a painting is born as an attempt at the *truth* of life, an attempt that in no sense compromises the integrity of the original.

Taking for granted that the theater spectators, like so many inmates of Plato's cave, would be chained to their seats by the spectacle of utter verisimilitude unfolding before them, Anaxagoras developed what amounts to the first scientific construct of modern propaganda—the promulgation of a lie that is accepted by the multitude as the truth, even though it is known to be a lie. The multitude is held in place—total immobility being essential to the illusion—as much by political and social barriers to spontaneous movement as by their own appetites and aspirations. Glassy-eyed, the audience stares at the ever wider screen.

If the screen upon which an invention is projected is a fiction that, once interposed between ourselves and the world, blocks out its light, then the artist's symbolic homage to reality is a window onto that world, an opening through which God's light may freely enter, continues Florensky. In the Orthodox rite, an *iconostasis* is the sanctuary screen that, during periods in the liturgy when the "kingly gates" are shut by the priest, isolates the altar from the congregation. This screen is entirely decorated with icons that are always open to the eyes of the faithful like windows onto the world of the spirit. They are symbols of real life, not lifelike imitations of reality.

There is no deeper conflict in history than that between these opposing views of art. "Is art to serve reality and the individual under God, or is it to serve realism and the masses under communism?" That is the question that the obsessively rationalist current of Western civilization—of which both French Jacobinism and Soviet communism are characteristic, if comparatively recent, tributaries—should have paused to ponder sometime in the 14th century.

The 14th century is the century of Giotto (1266-1337). Like St. Francis of Assisi ("whom they decided to canonize," writes Florensky, "for the simple reason that they had missed the chance to burn him at the stake"), Giotto is as famous as he is today—far more famous than, say, his teacher Cimabue (master of mosaics at the Cathedral of Pisa)—for a very good reason. "More than any other artist," thrills my 1975 *Columbia Desk Encyclopedia*, "he may be said to have determined the course of painting in Europe." What endears him to Western public opinion is his aura of "liberal humanism," sustained by the shrewd way in which he put his art at the service of the Franciscan forerunners of the Renaissance. According to Vasari, he was what he is now happily viewed as, a kind of proto-Leonardo, a rationalist thinker whose conception of life was the continuum of progress—especially scientific progress—in the direction of an earthly paradise, where the inventors of the useful and the creators of the beautiful would have the pride of place. It was in such a paradise, of course, that Florensky lived and died the death of a martyr.

And again, according to Russian art historian Alexander Benois, it was Giotto's experience of theater design—specifically, his painting of sets for mystery plays—that had given him the mastery of illusion so crucial to the "new realism" of the Assisi frescos. From that point on, the baton passes to Florence: Bruneleschi (1377-1449), Uccello (1396-1475), Andrea del Castagno (1423-1457), Alberti (1404-1472), Piero della Francesca (1420-1492), Donatello (1386-1466), Masaccio (1401-1429), Benozzo Gozzoli (1420-1498), and Filippo Lippi (1406-1469) all made important contributions to the newly condoned—nay, newly obligatory—practice of illusionism. Key examples are frescos in the Florentine Duomo by Uccello (1436), Castagno's "Passion of Christ" cycle in Sant'Apollonia (1445), and books on perspective by Piero della Francesca (*De perspectiva pingendi*) and Leon Battista Alberti (*On Painting*).

With the appearance of Leonardo (1452-1519) in the following generation, the practice gains full scientific backing and philosophical support. Realism is the way of the future, concurs Raphael (1483-1520). And when, finally, Michelangelo (1475-1564) blows into town with his bovine hyperrealism, one can no longer mince words. Art now serves the people—which, at this particular juncture in history, means the Medici.

Although the fundamentals of perspective had been universally understood for millennia, refining the new discipline and emptying its bottomless bag of tricks absorbed the finest minds of the epoch for almost five centuries—the same centuries that Hockney now ransacks for evidence of the uses of the lens, the prism, and the mirror. Of course the artists bent on illusionism used these optical tools! They would have used the blood of Florentine virgins if it would have made the floor tiles in their paintings more stereoscopic, the walls of houses more receding, the faces of models more lifelike. They would have sold their souls for a day in the photo department of Macy's.

And yet, argues Florensky, we see time and again that, despite the ever-increasing sophistication in the uses of perspective they evidence, each one of these undisputedly great masters of their craft *repudiates* and *casts off* the discipline whenever he wishes to impart to his painting an emotion commensurate with its visual ambition. Florensky cites a number of examples, starting with Leonardo's *Last Supper*, where the event involving more than 13 human figures takes place in a room less than two human figures high and three human figures wide, an iconographic device hearkening back to ancient Egypt, whereby different units of scale are applied to living beings and inanimate objects.

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Florensky points to Raphael's *School of Athens* and to his *Vision of Izekiel*, to works by El Greco (such as his *Burial of the Count Orgaz*) and Rubens (his *Flemish Landscape* in the Uffizi). Veronese, in his *Marriage at Cana*, used no fewer than *seven* different viewpoints and *five* horizons. Dürer—author of the treatise on perspective that teaches how to "beguile the eye"—decides, in his diptych *The Four Apostles*, to make the heads of the two standing farther away *bigger* than the heads of those in the foreground, giving his painting the perspectiveless flatness of a Greek relief.

In Dürer's books and engravings we find at least four different mechanical drawing devices, optical and others, of the sort that excites Hockney (including one that can be used by an artist who is literally *blind*, in the sense that it does not require eyesight, and where the final image is made up of thousands of dots, very much like those on a Pointillist landscape, or a children's game like Battleship, or on a computer screen), but, when apostolic push comes to emotional shove, Dürer throws it all out the window and wants his saints to look like *saints*, not like a couple of Germans on holiday.

Finally, Florensky points to Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, where the size of the figures increases the higher the viewer's eye climbs the plane of the fresco and the farther away they are from the viewer, who is consequently given a sense of his own human space incommensurate with the divine vastness "which expels him forthwith like a sea of liquid mercury."

What does it all mean? It means, says Florensky, that the perspective model of the world—like all scientific or rational constructs—is not a revelation of nature but a gradually acquired, laboriously cultivated, and, finally, forcibly imposed apperception of reality, which it has taken the civilized eye five centuries to accept and which, given the freedom to choose, it would still rather reject. A layman without special training, called upon to produce an image, will violate the dictates of perspective as a matter of course; a master like Dürer or Michelangelo will do the same as soon as he feels that he needs to be true to the conscience of his genius.

What realism really means is that the same person who accepts as "real," and is emotionally or otherwise moved by, the figure of Sharon Stone three inches high on a television screen, will argue that the image of the Virgin on a Russian icon is not "real" because the size of her body is out of proportion with the size of her face. He accepts the convention that he has been trained to accept, and any convention that he has not been trained to accept seems laughably naive.

Perhaps the most famous among conventions in Byzantine iconography is the use of gold leaf to depict light. Here is something quintessentially irreproducible: not on a television screen, not on a color photograph, not on an engraving. The visual effect of gold leaf can only be reproduced by using gold leaf.

Chemists are only now beginning to understand what gives gold its unique color. A recent article in *Chemistry in Britain* took issue with the assertion that "most of us would not have noticed if Einstein had not unified time and space" by pointing out that even quantum theory, whose equations govern the subatomic world, is not enough to understand chemistry. Chemists need Einstein. In particular, relativity shows that, as the speed of an object increases, so does its effective mass. The fast-moving electrons in heavy elements have high masses, and hence they tend to huddle closer to the nucleus. This leads to mercury, for instance, being a liquid at room temperature, and this is what gives gold its miraculous properties. Prof. Geoffrey Bond, the author of the article, concludes that the luster of gold is nothing less than the unity of space and time.

So, in the view of the iconographer, realist painting is incapable of expressing the notion of Divine Light, just as it is incapable of depicting a working magnet. After all, how does one depict magnetism by naturalist means? A cartoonist, on the other hand, has a suitable convention at his disposal. He would simply draw wavy lines "representing" the action of the lump of iron on another lump of iron, and everybody would understand what was happening in the picture.

As with magnetism, so with Divine Light, Presence, and Being. And so with a whole range of metaphysical concepts that so-called "realistic" painting cannot even begin to attempt to convey and, thus, has ended up dropping altogether from its visual vocabulary. Thus light, in Western painting, does not come from God, illuminating what He wants to illuminate in the Gospels. It comes from the open window, a lamp, or a candle, and illuminates what the artist wants to illuminate. Some will argue that such is individualism, and I agree. But, as Florensky objects, such "individualism is but the mechanical stamping of divine reality with one's own arbitrary cliches, ultimately content-less and always based on a yes-no dualism." Yes, light falls on this portion of the dress; no, it does not fall on that portion, decides the artist, and before long, we are back to Dürer's blind "digital painter," to mass-edition engravings, and to the binary code of the computer and of the television screen.

To the rationalist—which is to say, to the "socialist realist"—of the last five centuries, the iconographer's light suffusing the heavens with gold is simply not the way the sky looks. To the iconographer, the light that seems to emanate from the body of a Rubens nude is as unreal as the phosphorescence of rotting wood. Once you mistake this St. Elmo's fire for heavenly light, how surprising is it that pornographic images on a flickering screen will excite you physically? How surprising is it that you will accept the fake, the counterfeit, and the illusory in everything—in love, in liberty, in politics, in personal salvation?

And so, there we have it. A fallen, naked art, an art expelled from heavenly paradise, credulous and gullible, falls for whatever ideology will offer it shelter and for any earthly power that will clothe it with its own political aims. An art that no longer wished to serve God—and, hence, art—will henceforth serve the masses, and therefore, ultimately and inevitably, their totalitarian rulers. This I have personally seen with my own eyes, during a period of world history that is now fashionably supposed to have passed away like the French Revolution, but which I believe to be the logical terminus of the story of man in which the history of art is only a chapter.

While the technological potential of mankind—from the discoveries of optics and projection geometry to the cybernetic revolution and the digital image—has been augmented a thousand-fold, mankind's wisdom—in particular, man's ability to see beyond conventions, to know himself, and to master his own desires—has not followed suit. In the circumstances, I do not see how anything but global totalitarianism can be the future of mankind, with a niche allotted to the art applied to political ends. Socialist realism—which, if you really think about it, is just another term for secular art, an art cut off from its moorings and thrown into the grasp of an ideology, be it St. Francis's, or William Morris's, or Stalin's, or Hollywood's—is the way of the future.

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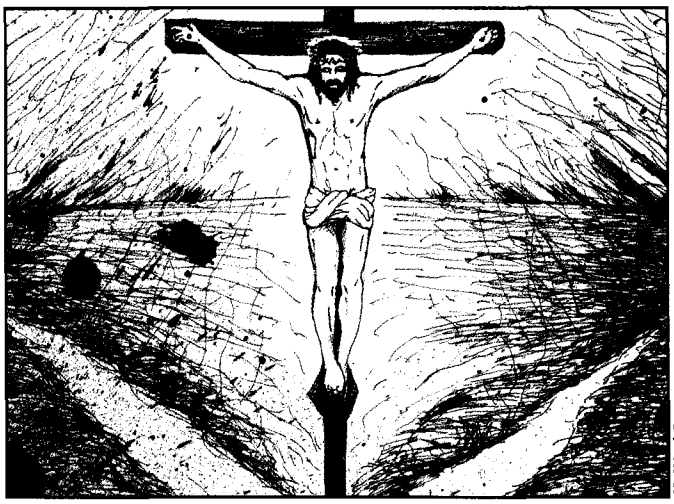
All Roads Lead to Florence

Lost and Found on the Path to Rome

by Fr. Hugh Barbour, O. Praem.

Peter: "Lord, wither goest thou?"
Christ: "I go to Rome to be crucified."



H. Ward Sterett

The monastic choir stalls of the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Florence were occupied not by the hermit-monks of the Camaldolese Order to whom they belonged but by laymen, members of the Platonic Academy. From the lectern, the Latin periods being intoned were not from Leo, Gregory, Augustine, or Jerome, but from a new translation of Plotinus. The one presiding by the altar was not a prior but a philosopher, Marsilio Ficino, founder of the Academy, translator of the works of Plato and of his Alexandrian alter ego. We would not know of the replacement of the nine psalms of Matins with the *Enneads* on a morning in early fall 1487 if it were not for the existence of a letter of outraged protest from the prior general of the Camaldolese Benedictines to the prior of the church where the uncanonical choral *solenne tornata accademica* was held. Yet even if the letter had been lost, the long view of subsequent history would perhaps have justified a suspicion that such things had occurred. Indeed, three centuries later, these strange, proto-masonic matins were to have an echo in another church dedicated under the name Mother of the Savior when the Goddess of Reason was enthroned before the chancel of Notre Dame in Paris in November 1793, to the strains of Chenier's hymn to Liberty. Perhaps they will have another still, if we can trust the prophetic vision and clerical realism of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson in his turn-of-the-20th-century *Lord of the World*:

> A great murmur of enthusiasm had rolled round the Abbey from end to end as the gorgeous curtains ran back, and the huge masculine figure, majestic and overwhelming, coloured with exquisite art, had stood out above the blaze of candles against the tall screen that shrouded the shrine . . . As the chink of the censer-chains had sounded in the stillness, with one consent the enormous crowd had fallen on its knees . . . England had found its worship once more—the necessary culmination of unimpeded subjectivity . . . In cathedral after cathedral had been the same scenes . . . Telegraphic reports had streamed into the London papers that everywhere the new movement had been received with acclamation, and that human instincts had found adequate expression at last . . . Life was the one fount and centre of it all, clad in the robes of ancient worship . . . It was positivism of a kind, Catholicism without Christianity, Humanity worship without its inadequacy. It was not man that was worshipped but the Idea of man, deprived of his supernatural principle.

From Ficino through Spinoza, the Lodge, and Feuerbach, to the mass demonstrations of the 20th century, and to Heaven-or Hell-knows-what in the 21st, from philosophy through polity to mass marketing, there is an unequivocal coherence of object: the emancipation in Christendom's Old and New Worlds of human reason, of the social order, and of individual pleasures from the service of the God of the Bible. The paraliturgical expressions of this emancipation may be zany or short-lived, like

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Lodge rituals, Brasil's Comptean Positivist Temple, or the Nuremberg rallies, but what they signify is deadly serious and both ideologically and temporally secular.

And it all began in Florence. Now, bashing the forces unleashed on the world by the Renaissance might seem as crazy as questioning the value of the Enlightenment or ungratefully rejecting the benefits bestowed on humanity by Stalin's winning of World War II. Nonetheless, I will manfully gird myself up to undertake the first of these three. As for the second, I hope it will simply be a *Q.E.D.* by the time I have finished. As for the third, in no way would I blame Uncle Joe for successively hoodwinking, first, the Nazis and, then, Yankee ex-Puritan capitalists who, for the moment at least, are enjoying the most recent, if not the last, laugh. In any case, they are all on the same side, at least from the eschatological perspective: the left. Asides aside, allow me to explain.

The genius of Christian *Romanitas*, both Constantinian and Carolingian, Byzantine and Frankish, was to blend the empire of Greek wisdom and Latin order with the concrete, barbarian vigor of Semite, Syrian, Slav, Armenian, Angle, Copt, Celt, German, and Magyar. This Roman power of cultural assimilation and sublimation was not the result of the merely material advantage offered to conquering legions or invading tribes, but of the religion that both emperors professed. This unified the imperial and barbarian worlds and made them one single thing: Christendom, *Christianitas* in both East and West. This Roman, Christian *oikoumene*, long beset by schism and diminished by *jihad*, made a final formal attempt at reasserting itself at the Council of Florence in 1439. It was the failure of the project of this synod, more than anything else, that allowed the Renaissance to become what it was and so led to the cultural devastation we see all around us.

> The world of late antiquity, with its capacity to transform those outside it into itself, born of the Christian faith, has been overcome by the disintegrating power of an enemy within the walls.

From the middle of the 14th century, the Orthodox of the Eastern Roman Empire had translated, studied, and admired the best products of the Latin Christian mind. The ardently Orthodox monk-emperor John-Joasaph Kantakuzenos commissioned the translation of Aquinas and Augustine into Greek. The decidedly antipapal Makarios Makres, Joseph Bryennios, and Mark of Ephesus were nonetheless students of the Angelic Doctor and his synthesis. They were, like the Thomists in the West, heirs of the great Patristic tradition that maintained the Church's biblical rule of faith and expounded it with the *organon* of reasoned argument and the ordering power of metaphysical intuitions borrowed from Plato and Aristotle via Dionysius the Areopagite. Additionally, they possessed the uninterrupted patrimony of classical rhetorical *paideia*. They were, in short, well prepared to engage in theological dialectic with their serious Latin counterparts in order to overcome the schism, reunite Christendom, and, thus, provide a bulwark against its enemies without.

On both sides, however, other forces were at work. The Greek *periti* lodged in Florence at the very same Camaldolese priory of Santa Maria degli Angeli that, in a few decades, would become the scene of the weird rite described above. At that time, it was the home of a great monk and man of letters, Blessed Ambrose Traversari. While there, the Greeks received abundant invitations, not so much to speak of theology as to enlighten the circle of Cosimo de Medici about Hellenic learning and, most particularly, Platonic philosophy. There were among the Greeks and the Latins those who admired the other side for reasons having nothing to do with the dogmas discussed at the council: Greeks who admired the diversity and progressive tendencies of late Scholasticism and the relative intellectual freedom of the Western schools, Latins who hoped to find in the Greeks the uncorrupted literary and philosophical culture of pagan humanism. These two parties found each other, and soon the neopagan Platonist crank Gemistos Plethon was delivering lectures on Plato to the circle from which Ficino's Academy would spring, and his students, the future cardinals Bessarion and Isidore, were planning new careers as Westernized Greek humanists and papal legates.

Meanwhile, the *pars sanior* produced the acts of the council. The friars and the Greek episcopal monastics slugged out its definitions. But who could blame the latter for being suspicious of those other Latins who seemed to be moving from late-Scholastic diversity into neopagan syncretism? When they got home, the union was already a dead letter, and the rest is history. What a disaster for the West! The Orthodox, whose coherent spiritual and liturgical traditions and whose finely honed sense of doctrinal probity could have bolstered the forces of their Catholic counterparts, left their lesser spirits, opportunistic humanists, behind in Italy and shut themselves up on Mt. Athos and in the monasteries of Constantinople, content to anathematize both humanist and mendicant friar alike. The union of Eastern and Western *Romania* was destroyed, perhaps, politically by the Turks but spiritually by the Florentine humanists and Greek zealots.

In Italy, the Roman Christian intellectual order in place since the days of Severinus Boethius unraveled. His project, identical in substance to that of the Byzantine East, of the harmonious exposition of Christian mysteries with a single philosophical tradition encompassing both Plato and Aristotle, was replaced by a paganizing radicalization of the positions of both and the pitting of one against the other and all against the Faith. The Platonic Academy in Florence had its counterpart in the radical Aristotelians of Padua. When the next Church council, the Fifth Lateran, was held from 1512 to 1517, it resolved not the serious dogmatic differences of earnest Eastern and Western Roman Christians but a complex intrigue that pitted the Medici pope, manipulated by the Florentine Platonists, against the radical Aristotelians who were *triste dictu* defended by the Thomist Cardinal Cajetan. Things had come to such a pass that the teaching of the mortality of the soul and the eternity of the world in universities had to be forbidden, and clerical students had to be reminded that they must study theology, not merely philosophy and letters.

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The disintegration of Christendom had begun under the aëgis of the revival of classical philosophy. The ascendancy of autonomous reason and anti-Christian ideology were guaranteed. It is not at all unreasonable to believe that these currents would have been greatly mitigated had the union of East and West been effective. The East would have vigorously confirmed the best of the medieval Latin tradition. Instead, the Latin West was now forced to ignore the East in its attempts to maintain Christendom, and, after the Reformation, it would openly compete with it, especially in Slavic lands. The humanist Pope Pius II was able to write to the Sultan Mehmet II, conqueror of Constantinople and *amateur* of Italian humanism, encouraging his study of Greek philosophy, assuring him that the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle were substantially those of the Christian faith, and urging him to convert to Catholicism, so that Pius might crown him Roman emperor.

The rigorist reaction of the saintly Savanarola and the anti-Roman animus of Luther were both tragically inefficacious in their opposition to the humanist onslaught. In the case of the latter, the Protestant movement further weakened the fabric of Roman Christendom with its rejection of the norm of the Imperial Church of the Fathers. The words of Article 19 of the 39 Articles of the Church of England exemplify the rejection by even the most moderate of Protestants of the living patristic norm affirmed at Florence: "As the Church of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria have erred so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith."

That the Renaissance humanist tradition represented by the Platonic Academy of Florence is at the root of modern revolution, especially in its esoteric elements, is not some extreme integralist accusation. It is the considered opinion of the best students of the movements of the *quattrocento*. The late Italian Renaissance scholar and Marxist Eugenio Garin, among others, can be consulted on this point in all serenity. What is not sufficiently understood, however, is the extent to which the continuation of the schism between Old and New Rome made anti-Christian revolution a reality, and so helped to cause a Protestant reaction that might otherwise have been unnecessary.

By now, the Roman Christian composite of Greco-Roman and barbarian culture has been corrupted, and a Brave New World is being established in which an esoteric elite governs the white- and blue-collar proletarian *membra disiecta* of the old order. The world of late antiquity, with its capacity to transform those outside it into itself, born of the Christian faith, has been overcome by the disintegrating power of an enemy within the walls. We latter-day Christian Latins, unlike our Trojan forbears, were undone by Greeks who went home: *Timeo Danaos et dona auferentes.* But perhaps from this disaster, now reaching its conclusion, a still newer Rome can be born. Pope John Paul II has had no more fervent desire than the reintegration of the Eastern and Western communions. There is no doubt that he regards this as a necessary condition for the new evangelization of the traditionally Christian lands of the Old and New World, a program he announced early in his reign at the shrine of Santiago Matamoros at Compostela. It is a cultural as well as a doctrinal imperative. Christendom, he says in his letter *Orientale Lumen*, must breathe "with both lungs."

The great Hungarian Benedictine physicist Stanley Jaki, starting from a perspective different from my own, draws similar conclusions as mine and conveys them elegantly. In an article published in *Theology Today* in 1973, he wrote:

> Ficino's school of Neoplatonism in Florence around 1470, celebrated with Plato a natural or scientific knowledge of God which had no room for a revelation as understood in the Bible. In 1470 and afterwards, few were aware of this big difference between the proud a-priorism of Plato and the humbling story of the Bible. Worse even, some successors of Peter were more drawn to Plato than to the Bible. Councils were not effective in stemming the sad drift toward paganism. No wonder that embittered and frustrated Reformers took into their own hands, for better or for worse, the cause of reform, that is, the reassertion of the biblical knowledge of God over the natural knowledge of God. For the ultimate spiritual issue in the Reformation concerned not particular doctrinal points, but the reassertion of the Bible and the Cross over Plato and nature. Two hundred years went by and reformers as well as counterreformers should have seen at long last that their real challenge was not with one another. The Encyclopedists, a motley lot, were at one in rejecting everything supernatural . . . There is now in the making an attack on Christ and Christianity, an attack more sweeping and thorough than any other before. As was the case with the members of the early church we shall not be attacked on the particulars of our dogmatics . . . The world is ready to tolerate our skirmishes on finer points of doctrine. The world might look even benignly on our liturgical practices because man, so the wisdom of the world has it, should project himself in symbolic rituals. But the world will not be impressed by the efforts of latter-day Christian Neoplatonists who are, in order to gain the world, busy recasting the Christian message in the subtle inconsistencies of process theology and evolutionarism.

Father Jaki makes a key point: The world tends to take Christian liturgical worship lightly, not opposing it with the vigor with which it would attack us for our moral teaching. Here is precisely where Eastern Christendom has so much at heart and so much to offer, which perhaps will be the source of a renewal of *Romanitas*. It is worship, after all, which is the heart of Christian culture, since it is the act of the God-Man Himself hanging on the wood of the Cross and lifted up from our altars: "And if I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself." Christians are called to imitate what they handle in their liturgy, and this means ultimately to meet the world's false cult of reason and self-will with the witness of martyrdom. Is this not the truest second birth and initiation, truer by far than any elitist "renaissance" with its bogus esoteric mysteries? In the same article, Father Jaki goes on to say: "The church, as the Fathers liked to point out, was born on the cross from the pierced heart of the Son of God. Our unity will not be reborn except through our readiness to be crucified with Him."

One of the anaphoras of the Roman Missal praises the Father in the fulfillment of Malachai's prophecy: *From age to age you gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure oblation may be offered to Your Name.* May today's Christian Romans of East and West say, with Christ, *Urbi et Orbi*—"I go to Rome to be crucified."

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Petrarch's *The Ascent of Mount Ventoux*

To Dionisio da Borgo San Sepolcro

Petrarch is often described as the first modern man, and, even before Renaissance painters worked out the rules for perspective, the poet had been able to develop an historical perspective on the past. His decision to climb Mt. Ventoux is interpreted as the first sign of the individual restlessness that bore fruit (much of it sour) during the Renaissance and Enlightenment. What Petrarch really gained from his mountain-top perspective on the world, however, was a longing to return to his beloved Italy and a renewed sense of humility. —*TJF*

At the time fixed we left the house, and by evening reached Malaucene, which lies at the foot of the mountain, to the north. Having rested there a day, we finally made the ascent this morning, with no companions except two servants; and a most difficult task it was. The mountain is a very steep and almost inaccessible mass of stony soil. But, as the poet has well said, "Remorseless toil conquers all." It was a long day, the air fine. We enjoyed the advantages of vigour of mind and strength and agility of body, and everything else essential to those engaged in such an undertaking and so had no other difficulties to face than those of the region itself. We found an old shepherd in one of the mountain dales, who tried, at great length, to dissuade us from the ascent, saying that some 50 years before he had, in the same ardour of youth, reached the summit, but had gotten for his pains nothing except fatigue and regret, and clothes and body torn by the rocks and briars. No one, so far as he or his companions knew, had ever tried the ascent before or after him. But his counsels increased rather than diminished our desire to proceed, since youth is suspicious of warnings. . . .

I finally sat down in a valley and transferred my winged thoughts from things corporeal to the immaterial, addressing myself as follows: "What thou hast repeatedly experienced today in the ascent of this mountain, happens to thee, as to many, in the journey toward the blessed life. But this is not so readily perceived by men, since the motions of the body are obvious and external while those of the soul are invisible and hidden. Yes, the life which we call blessed is to be sought for on a high eminence, and strait is the way that leads to it. Many, also, are the hills that lie between, and we must ascend, by a glorious stairway, from strength to strength. At the top is at once the end of our struggles and the goal for which we are bound. All wish to reach this goal, but, as Ovid says, 'To wish is little; we must long with the utmost eagerness to gain our end.' Thou certainly dost ardently desire, as well as simply wish, unless thou deceivest thyself in this matter, as in so many others. What, then, doth hold thee back? Nothing, assuredly, except that thou wouldst take a path which seems, at first thought, more easy, leading through low and worldly pleasures. But nevertheless in the end, after long wanderings, thou must perforce either climb the steeper path, under the burden of tasks foolishly deferred, to its blessed culmination, or lie down in the valley of thy sins, and (I shudder to think of it!), if the shadow of death overtake thee, spend an eternal night amid constant torments." These thoughts stimulated both body and mind in a wonderful degree for facing the difficulties which yet remained. . . .

Then a new idea took possession of me, and I shifted my thoughts to a consideration of time rather than place. "To-day it is ten years since, having completed thy youthful studies, thou didst leave Bologna. Eternal God! In the name of immutable wisdom, think what alterations in thy character this intervening period has beheld! I pass over a thousand instances. I am not yet in a safe harbour where I can calmly recall past storms. The time may come when I can review in due order all the experiences of the past, saying with St. Augustine, 'I desire to recall my foul actions and the carnal corruption of my soul, not because I love them, but that I may the more love thee, O my God.' Much that is doubtful and evil still clings to me, but what I once loved, that I love no longer. And yet what am I saying? I still love it, but with shame, but with heaviness of heart. Now, at last, I have confessed the truth. So it is. I love, but love what I would not love, what I would that I might hate. Though loath to do so, though constrained, though sad and sorrowing, still I do love, and I feel in my miserable self the truth of the well known words, 'I will hate if I can; if not, I will love against my will.'" . . .

While I was thus dividing my thoughts, now turning my attention to some terrestrial object that lay before me, now raising my soul, as I had done my body, to higher planes, it occurred to me to look into my copy of St. Augustine's *Confessions* . . . I opened the compact little volume, small indeed in size, but of infinite charm, with the intention of reading whatever came to hand, for I could happen upon nothing that would be otherwise than edifying and devout. Now it chanced that the tenth book presented itself. My brother, waiting to hear something of St. Augustine's from my lips, stood attentively by. I call him, and God too, to witness that where I first fixed my eyes it was written: "And men go about to wonder at the heights of the mountains, and the mighty waves of the sea, and the wide sweep of rivers, and the circuit of the ocean, and the revolution of the stars, but themselves they consider not." I was abashed, and, asking my brother (who was anxious to hear more), not to annoy me, I closed the book, angry with myself that I should still be admiring earthly things who might long ago have learned from even the pagan philosophers that nothing is wonderful but the soul, which, when great itself, finds nothing great outside itself. Then, in truth, I was satisfied that I had seen enough of the mountain; I turned my inward eye upon myself, and from that time not a syllable fell from my lips until we reached the bottom again. Those words had given me occupation enough, for I could not believe that it was by a mere accident that I happened upon them. What I had there read I believed to be addressed to me and to no other, remembering that St. Augustine had once suspected the same thing in his own case, when, on opening the book of the Apostle, as he himself tells us, the first words that he saw there were, "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

—*From* Petrarch: The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters, *James Harvey Robinson, editor and translator*

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Pico Della Mirandola's *Oration On the Dignity Of Man*

I once read that Abdala the Muslim, when asked what was most worthy of awe and wonder in this theater of the world, answered, "There is nothing to see more wonderful than man!" Hermes Trismegistus concurs with this opinion: "A great miracle, Asclepius, is man!" However, when I began to consider the reasons for these opinions, all these reasons given for the magnificence of human nature failed to convince me: that man is the intermediary between creatures, close to the gods, master of all the lower creatures, with the sharpness of his senses, the acuity of his reason, and the brilliance of his intelligence the interpreter of nature, the nodal point between eternity and time, and, as the Persians say, the intimate bond or marriage song of the world, just a little lower than angels as David tells us. . . . After thinking a long time, I have figured out why man is the most fortunate of all creatures and as a result worthy of the highest admiration and earning his rank on the chain of being, a rank to be envied not merely by the beasts but by the stars themselves and by the spiritual natures beyond and above this world. This miracle goes past faith and wonder. And why not? It is for this reason that man is rightfully named a magnificent miracle and a wondrous creation.

What is this rank on the chain of being? God the Father, Supreme Architect of the Universe, built this home, this universe we see all around us, a venerable temple of his godhead, through the sublime laws of his ineffable Mind. The expanse above the heavens he decorated with Intelligences, the spheres of heaven with living, eternal souls. The scabrous and dirty lower worlds he filled with animals of every kind. However, when the work was finished, the Great Artisan desired that there be some creature to think on the plan of his great work, and love its infinite beauty, and stand in awe at its immenseness. Therefore, when all was finished, as Moses and Timaeus tell us, He began to think about the creation of man. But he had no Archetype from which to fashion some new child, nor could he find in his vast treasure-houses anything which He might give to His new son, nor did the universe contain a single place from which the whole of creation might be surveyed. All was perfected, all created things stood in their proper place, the highest things in the highest places, the midmost things in the midmost places, and the lowest things in the lowest places. But God the Father would not fail, exhausted and defeated, in this last creative act. God's wisdom would not falter for lack of counsel in this need. God's love would not permit that he whose duty it was to praise God's creation should be forced to condemn himself as a creation of God.

Finally, the Great Artisan mandated that this creature who would receive nothing proper to himself shall have joint possession of whatever nature had been given to any other creature. He made man a creature of indeterminate and indifferent nature, and, placing him in the middle of the world, said to him "Adam, we give you no fixed place to live, no form that is peculiar to you, nor any function that is yours alone. According to your desires and judgment, you will have and possess whatever place to live, whatever form, and whatever functions you yourself choose. All other things have a limited and fixed nature prescribed and bounded by our laws. You, with no limit or no bound, may choose for yourself the limits and bounds of your nature. We have placed you at the world's center so that you may survey everything else in the world. We have made you neither of heavenly nor of earthly stuff, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with free choice and dignity, you may fashion yourself into whatever form you choose. To you is granted the power of degrading yourself into the lower forms of life, the beasts, and to you is granted the power, contained in your intellect and judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, the divine."

Imagine! The great generosity of God! The happiness of man! To man it is allowed to be whatever he chooses to be! . . . Man, when he entered life, the Father gave the seeds of every kind and every way of life possible. Whatever seeds each man sows and cultivates will grow and bear him their proper fruit. If these seeds are vegetative, he will be like a plant. If these seeds are sensitive, he will be like an animal. If these seeds are intellectual, he will be an angel and the son of God. And if, satisfied with no created thing, he removes himself to the center of his own unity, his spiritual soul, united with God, alone in the darkness of God, who is above all things, he will surpass every created thing. Who could not help but admire this great shapeshifter? In fact, how could one admire anything else? . . .

[T]he mystic philosophy of the Hebrews transforms Enoch into an angel called "Mal'akh Adonay Shebaoth," and sometimes transforms other humans into different sorts of divine beings. The Pythagoreans abuse villainous men by having them reborn as animals and, according to Empedocles, even plants. Muhammad also said frequently, "Those who deviate from the heavenly law become animals." Bark does not make a plant a plant, rather its senseless and mindless nature does. The hide does not make an animal an animal, but rather its irrational but sensitive soul. . . . It is not a lack of body that makes an angel an angel, rather it is his spiritual intelligence. If you see a person totally subject to his appetites, crawling miserably on the ground, you are looking at a plant, not a man. If you see a person blinded by empty illusions and images, and made soft by their tender beguilements, completely subject to his senses, you are looking at an animal, not a man. If you see a philosopher judging things through his reason, admire and follow him: He is from heaven, not the earth. If you see a person living in deep contemplation, unaware of his body and dwelling in the inmost reaches of his mind, he is neither from heaven nor earth, he is divinity clothed in flesh. . . .

Let us disdain earthly things, and despise the things of heaven, and, judging little of what is in the world, fly to the court beyond the world and next to God. In that court, as the mystic writings tell us, are the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones in the foremost places; let us not even yield place to them, the highest of the angelic orders, and not be content with a lower place, imitate them in all their glory and dignity. If we choose to, we will not be second to them in anything.

—*Translated by Richard Hooker*

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Dixie Dystopia

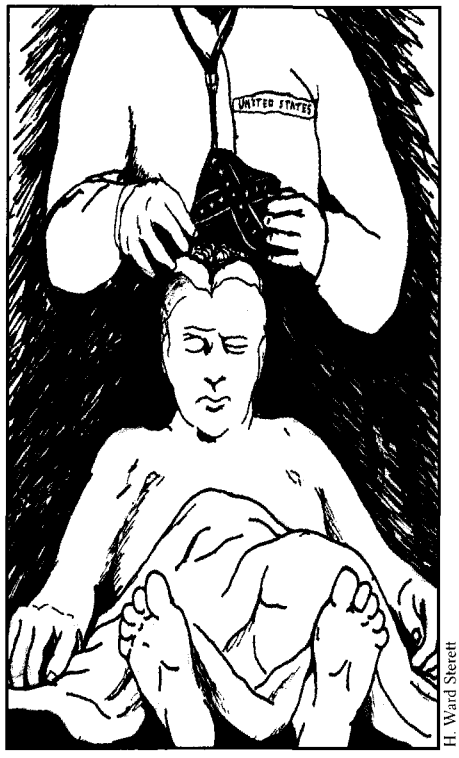
by Clyde Wilson

How easy it is to make people believe a lie, and how hard it is to undo that work again.
–Mark Twain

The Last Confederate Flag
by Lloyd E. Lenard
Baltimore: AmErica House;
432 pp., $29.95

Bedford: A World Vision
by Ellen Williams
Belleville, Ontario: Guardian Books;
299 pp., $15.95

Death by Journalism?
One Teacher's Fateful Encounter with Political Correctness
by Jerry Bledsoe
Asheboro, NC: Down Home Press;
241 pp., $24.95



H. Ward Sterett

Just in case you have not heard, we are in the midst of a Culture War. *Death by Journalism?* is a battle report from the front lines. *The Last Confederate Flag* and *Bedford: A World Vision* are fictional near-future projections, in the spirit of Orwell, of how the war is going to end. Coming all at the same time, these books provide a grim view of our prospects. The war is heating up, and culture is losing.

Fortuitously, these authors tend to support my understanding of what the war is all about: a totalitarian-minded drive to impose a uniform public nonculture on the American people. Despite optimistic statements to the contrary, America has never been culturally homogeneous. (By culture, I mean something like widespread folk attitudes and articulated and unarticulated assumptions about private and public things.) There is a Jamestown/Robert E. Lee/country-music America. Let's call it "Confederate America" for short. Conquered, impoverished, and despised, Confederate America remarkably maintains a continuing vigor, mostly below official radar and fashionable discussion.

Then there is Plymouth Rock/Abraham Lincoln/General Motors America. (I am talking here about "culture," not economics.) For short, let's say "Yankee America." Yankee America never really had much folk culture except a kind of leveling of distinctions and what John Lukacs has aptly described as a genuine but peculiarly materialistic idealism. Yankee America has had, and continues to have, lots of power, prestige, and wealth, but its chief strengths have been technology and productivity.

Next came Ellis Island/Catholic/Perry Como America, which we can call "Catholic America." It mostly acquiesced in such aspects of Yankee America as it liked or was forced to accept, while adding a little spice to the Boston pot roast.

Now we have Frankfurt School/Martin Luther King, Jr./MTV America, invented by European totalitarians and imported into the United States in the 1930's. It is aggressive, mean-spirited, bent on conquest, and, based on the evidence in these books and all around us, controls much of the American arsenal of cultural power. Let's call this phenomenon, though the label is not really accurate, "Multicultural America." Multicultural America initiated the Culture War and is spearheading its offensives. Its leaders take no prisoners and do not spare the weak and innocent.

Yankee America is culturally and demographically moribund. The victories of the Multiculturalists are mostly a result of the Yankee elite's intellectual shallowness, moral cowardice, and continual appeasement. In fact, the Yankee elite and the Multicultural elite can barely be distinguished anymore. Though it has temporarily rallied its masses by an appeal to abstract "America," with the help of Rush Limbaugh radio demagoguery, the Yankee elite is really holding on to its wealth and some of its prestige by drawing taxes, votes, and fighting men from Confederate America and Catholic America. Two Connecticut Bushes have become president by pretending to be Texans and pretending to represent the concerns of traditional Americans, for whom they have never done and never will do anything. (Ford, Dole, Kemp, etc., could not pull off the trick.) It is Little George, the preferred candidate of sincere Christians, who has changed the American motto from "Protestant, Catholic, Jew" to "Protestant, Catholic, Jew, and Muslim." (Clinton took money from the Bud-

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dhists, but even he did not promote them to the pantheon.)

As I see it, Catholic America is very uneasy about the advances of the Multiculturalists but has developed no widespread resistance to them. Its allegiance is to "America," and it has not quite grasped that the map of America has been redrawn by the Multiculturalists and that it is next on the list of targets after Confederate America has been disposed of. Pat Buchanan has tried to sound the alarm, but so far he has not had much success.

The fact is that Confederate Americans (wherever they live) make up the only sizeable block of the American populace that has so far resisted (largely reflexively rather than reflectively) the multicultural dispensation. Confederate America is the only American culture that can keep and recruit individuals into its ranks at the folk level without, and even in opposition to, government education and patronage. In fact, it has been gathering recruits from among the ranks of Yankee and Catholic defectors.

The first objective of the Multiculturalists in their current offensive is to quash and eliminate Confederate America by Soviet-style propaganda and suppression. This task is made much easier by the fact that much of both Yankee and Catholic America disdains Confederate America, harbors many old prejudices against it, and is not averse to giving us another thrashing now and then.

Those who do not live in Dixie may have missed the pervasiveness of the attacks against the culture and history of Confederate America. In a small way, this can be seen as a late mopping-up campaign of the civil-rights revolution. It is certainly fueled by the prospective raid on the federal treasury known as "reparations for slavery." But there is more to it than that. It is a major offensive of the Multiculturalists. It is being abetted by the shortsighted leaders of Yankee America who are hoping that Confederate Americans (still demographically numerous) will keep voting Republican and be pacified into resembling Yankee America. Unfortunately, becoming more like Yankee America is merely a stage on the way to multiculturalism. As a great 19th-century Southern thinker, Robert Lewis Dabney, observed, Northern "conservatives," over the entire course of American history, have never conserved anything.

The Last Confederate Flag is a story of an upright, respected citizen who, by speaking publicly in favor of Confederate symbols and resisting a murderous armed attack on his home by militant minorities, finds his family slaughtered and himself in prison, demonized in the media. In *Bedford: A World Vision*, we get a taste of the New World Order. "Worldvision," totalitarian, therapeutic, and pseudotolerant, is the pervasive ideology, enforced at every level. What used to be Alabama is now a numbered district of the World Order. Nonliberal Christians are confined, except during work hours, in camps where their intolerance will not damage the public. And there is much more. Both books are well told, attention-holding, and thought-provoking.

Are these authors' predictions fevered fantasies, unthinkable in good old quotidian America? Here are some things that have really happened in recent years.

A boy doodles a Confederate flag in his notebook at school and is suspended. In another state, a boy checks out a school library book with the same offending symbol. Beaten to the point of hospitalization by black and Hispanic students, the *victim* is suspended from school. The thugs remain untouched by any authority.

During the presidential primary in South Carolina, candidates McCain and Bush declare that the status of the Confederate banner is a question for the people of the state to decide. After the primary, Bush's henchmen illegally remove, in the dark of night, two harmless plaques put up years ago by Confederate widows in the Texas Supreme Court building. McCain makes a special trip back to South Carolina to declare that he lied for advantage and really thinks the flag must be banished.

A peaceable old gentleman stands up to ask a question of a famous "civil rights" personality after a speech at a public university. In accord with instructions by the speaker, the old gentleman is hustled out of the chamber and roughed up by three burly young policemen before he has said a word. The policemen make no reply and seem embarrassed when onlookers ask what the gentleman had done wrong.

A longtime, respected congressman dies, leaving a request that "Dixie" be played at the gathering of his mourners. The Vice President of the United States demands that the tune be suppressed as the price of his attendance at the funeral.

Distinguished clergymen and scholars who have spoken publicly against the official, "totally evil" version of Southern history are characterized as part of an extremist conspiracy by low-level employees of a "civil rights" organization who have no credentials or moral standing to pass judgment on either history or other people's character. The libels, however, are taken as fact by the media and registered by law-enforcement agencies.

I could catalog a hundred more such instances. Do not think that only the useless nostalgic sentiments of misguided Southerners are at stake here. The Yankee or standard version of American history is also an obstacle to the conquering forces. I know of a university professor who teaches that colonial Virginians (Washington and Jefferson) were similar to the Taliban (presumably because they were not feminists and sometimes carried weapons). I would bet your children are learning the same.

All this should tell us several things, besides the truth that *The Last Confederate Flag* and *Bedford: A World Vision* are not fantasies but merely logical extensions of present trends. They tell us that local initiative and decisionmaking and (almost) local thought itself have disappeared. Law enforcement and education and information media have been imperialized to the point where every public-school principal in the land has been conditioned to enforce uniform policies from Washington, D.C., however unreasonable or in defiance of common sense or community sentiment those policies may be. Every newspaper reports (and ignores) the same stories in the same way, and every police department takes instruction from the FBI. And history, as an humane, intellectually liberating study, is being replaced by an officially enforced party line.

In the Foreword to *Death by Journalism?*, Jerry Bledsoe explains that he was prompted to carry out his careful investigation because he had come to realize that "political censorship had become a very real possibility" in his own neighborhood. And the dust-jacket copy, for once, is precisely accurate: "*Death by Journalism?* raises important questions about free speech, academic freedom, racial politics and news media integrity."

Bledsoe, a maverick investigative reporter and best-selling author of true-crime books, tells the sad, true story of Jack Perdue, who became a national media demon and was literally hounded to death when he was picked to be the target of a Multicultural advance man in

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the heart of North Carolina. That is my native country and Bledsoe's, and the author's account rings true. Jack Perdue was a year or two ahead of me in Greensboro High School (which, incidentally, was the first school in the state to be integrated, while we were there).

Jack was an engineer by trade and a lifelong, published amateur (in the best sense) historian, with a vast knowledge of all aspects of local lore. He was also a benevolently active citizen, respected for integrity and service, who volunteered to teach for free an adult education course on "North Carolina in the Civil War" at a branch of the Randolph County Community College. Randolph County is a largely rural region, partly absorbed into the southern suburbs of Greensboro.

Enter from the left Ethan Feinsilver, son of a Washington, D.C., psychiatrist and a University of Chicago graduate, recently hired as a reporter for the *Greensboro News & Record* and assigned to the Randolph County beat. Mr. Feinsilver, whose press associates considered him to be a disagreeable loner, found Randolph County the domain of despicable rednecks, and his reportage of local affairs reflected his attitude even before he had heard of Jack Perdue.

Then, in 1998, he discovered Jack Perdue's history course. Perdue was giving a balanced account of conditions and events in his beloved area during the war, including the well-established fact that some black people served the Confederacy. He taught nothing that is not being taught in a hundred places at this moment or that has not been taught for the last century. The trouble was that Jack Perdue had not taken advanced study, where he would have learned that evidence must be reinterpreted according to current dicta.

No civil-rights group had complained. Students in the elective course, some of them Northern immigrants, have been extensively interviewed by Bledsoe. None had found anything biased or offensive in the course. They also thought Jack Perdue a fair and good teacher, resisted repeated attempts by Mr. Feinsilver to provoke negative comments from them, and were amazed by the baseless and outrageous assertions reflected in Feinsilver's questions and in his subsequent articles.

The *News & Record* reported that Randolph County Community College was sponsoring a course that taught that antebellum blacks were happy as slaves and was serving as a front for a "neo-Confederate hate group" (the Sons of Confederate Veterans). The story was distributed worldwide on the AP wire, provoked an investigation by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, and became a topic for national TV news and talk shows. Soon, it was received as "fact" that a Southern college was teaching the old, evil, exploded fiction that slaves were happy. Across the country, papers carried headlines like "Sugar-coated Slavery," "A Rosy View of Slavery," and "College Course Opens Old Wounds."

The college officials, faculty, and students all emphatically denied the substance of Mr. Feinsilver's "news" stories, but the newspaper executives stonewalled and upheld Feinsilver's accuracy. (Curiously, however, he was put on probation and, apparently, dismissed six months later.) After months of the stress of international demonization, Jack Perdue died suddenly of a heart attack. He had always been healthy and was barely 60. His family and friends believe that he was literally murdered by the media. The same news executives refused to run an obituary of a local who had been made an international figure a few months before through their own efforts and refused to be interviewed by Bledsoe, a former prize-winning reporter for the paper (which twice offered me a job as editorial writer long ago in my misspent youth).

We see in these events the awful evil power and lockstep thinking of the media, of course. We find a local press that dances to the tune of the Multiculturalists and heeds not its own community.

But we already knew those things. I am more interested in the role of history in all of this and what it tells us about the state of American thought and public discourse. Why was the college allowing Jack Perdue to teach false ideas and in such a controversial way? Feinsilver demanded to know.

I have my own questions. What was a newspaper reporter doing in a classroom, uninvited, investigating the orthodoxy of what was being taught? Can you imagine this happening, say, in an Afrocentric or Gay and Lesbian Studies course? (Set aside the condition that the reporter is a hostile outsider who seems to believe that his orthodoxy should be enforced on other people with a different heritage by the methods of media lynching.)

Where does Feinsilver's orthodoxy come from? What authority or knowledge does Mr. Feinsilver possess that makes his version of history unquestionable truth and someone else's false and dangerous? Obviously, he considers himself a representative of Multicultural America, endowed with divine right (if only the Multiculturalists believed in the divine) to impose its orthodoxy on all of society. Is there now an official version of history? Should dissenters be punished? Are we all required to accept the official summing up of several centuries of complex American history in a few vulgar slogans? Are historical interpretations to be eternally static in keeping with the attitudes of official "experts" rather than responsive to the weighing of evidence and the debating of conclusions?

Of course, none of this is really history. It recalls Soviet history, in which dogma and slogans were substituted for the study of the immense complexities of human experience. The latter can, perhaps, make us a little wiser; the former serves only the purpose of conquest. Do not expect the numerous cohort of credentialed academic historians to mount any opposition to the reduction of investigation and understanding to propaganda and conformity, however. They will acquiesce in, if not actively abet, the official orthodoxy.

LIBERAL ARTS

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—*from "Brides could blush over these dresses," the* Rockford Register Star, *January 4, 2002*

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Jefferson's Cousin

by Stephen B. Presser

John Marshall and the Heroic Age of the Supreme Court
by R. Kent Newmyer
Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press; 511 pp., $39.95

◆

There are probably more judicial biographies of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall than of all the rest of the Supreme Court justices combined, so why another one? R. Kent Newmyer, historian and law professor at the University of Connecticut School of Law, undertook to write a work that would not mirror the standard hagiographical account. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., once said, "If American law were to be represented by a single figure, skeptic and worshipper alike would agree . . . that the figure could be one alone, and that one, John Marshall." Holmes is universally regarded as the only authentic sage ever to sit on the high-court bench, so his opinion commands great authority. Indeed, Marshall is generally given credit for the American institution of judicial review, the practice whereby the Court tests laws to see if they are in accordance with the Constitution and nullifies them if they are not. In the great cases of *McCulloch* v. *Maryland* (1819) and *Gibbons* v. *Ogden* (1824), Marshall laid the groundwork for the expansive interpretation of the Commerce Clause, which has allowed the federal government to intrude into virtually every aspect of American life. In *Dartmouth College* v. *Woodward* (1819), Marshall prevented the state of New Hampshire from altering the charter of Dartmouth College, and, in the process, immunized existing corporations from having their articles of incorporation abridged by the states.

Marshall is currently the hero of those who favor an intrusive federal judiciary, and *McCulloch*, *Gibbons*, and *Dartmouth College* are usually presented as bold judicial innovations that justify today's brand of judicial activism. But Newmyer, arguably our best judicial biographer (his book on Marshall's colleague Justice Joseph Story might be the finest book on an American judge), offers a different appraisal in this volume in LSU Press's Southern Biography Series, where the author presents Marshall not as the nationalist aggrandizer that most biographers have lionized but as a conservative Virginian. This is bold of him, since the quintessential Virginian, Marshall's cousin Thomas Jefferson, loathed the Chief Justice (his dislike was enthusiastically reciprocated), and Jefferson regarded Marshall as one of the chief "sappers and miners" seeking to obliterate the power of the states and impose a national aristocracy or monarchy on the good people of this country.

Newmyer's Marshall is presented warts and all, and the resulting figure is both lesser and greater than the currently prevailing legal caricature. Newmyer shows us that some of Marshall's opinions turned on his own financial needs as a land speculator, that Marshall was a careful manipulator of cases and litigants to achieve maximum political effect, and that he avoided ruling on issues that might result in the Court's pronouncements being ignored by the executive branch—while stoutly maintaining that Supreme Court jurisprudence should not be confused with politics. But Newmyer also limns a subtle Burkean who eschewed abstract theories and was committed to preserving existing American institutions, celebrating the rule of law, and building a viable national market that could sustain American independence and eventually result in American greatness. This Marshall, though believing in the need for national uniformity in property and contract doctrines, is not the consolidator his cousin Thomas labeled him. In most matters, Newmyer argues, Marshall believed in the primacy of state law and local governments, while (he even confesses) his subject would have been appalled by the New Deal and the riotous expansion of the federal government that followed.

For those who had all but given up hope that the jurisprudential philosophy of the Old Republic might ever be restored, Newmyer's look at Justice Marshall at least offers the possibility that current lawyers and law students can learn more about what that philosophy actually *was* and, perhaps, even be persuaded of its merits. Newmyer, by presenting Marshall as a passionate but very human judge, reminds us of the limits of trusting judges as legislators; and, by portraying Marshall as the conservative Virginian that he was, Newmyer underscores the Constitution's original vesting of primary legal authority in the states. In short, Newmyer has written a book to be placed on the required reading list for jurisprudential paleoconservatives, who should be pleased to discover in Marshall a kindred spirit.

Fashions come and go in legal education and legal academic scholarly research, and the jurisprudential premises of one generation's law professors generally are played out in the judicial opinions of the next. Our current era of freewheeling judicial legislation is relatively young. (It began with the New Deal, peaked in 1973 with *Roe* v. *Wade*, and, in the Rehnquist Court, shows signs of weakening.) So perhaps the appearance of a new perspective on Marshall is an encouraging epiphenomenon signaling a change in academic fashion.

In American law schools, the dominant jurisprudential views are still those of the Ted Kennedy wing of the Democratic Party, but the emergence of the Federalist Society—concerned with reducing judicial legislation and returning political power to the states—indicates some healthy ferment. Newmyer and his work (his biography of Justice Story also presents that judicial titan as a conservative Burkean) are part of this ferment. Newmyer himself is something of a reluctant participant, to the point of protesting against the possibility that he might be perceived as a conservative. Worse, he characterizes Marshall's beliefs in the primacy of property and in natural law as "archaic." Suppose, however, that Marshall's ideas are not simply artifacts of his time but the expression of timeless truths. Then perhaps reading their lucid exposition in this elegant volume and learning that the Marshall beloved by the liberals is an historical fabrication might encourage those who seek to return these central premises of the rule of law to the place they once enjoyed in our polity.

Even Newmyer cannot help but slip into the hagiographic mode. Though he finds Marshall to have been occasionally self-seeking, he presents the interests involved as coinciding with those of the nation. Further, whenever Marshall pulls his jurisprudential punches—for example, to avoid direct confrontations with the hostile presidents Jefferson or Jackson—Newmyer praises the discretion of the Chief Justice in preserving the Court to fight another day. In the hands of another writer, Marshall's prudence might have been labeled cowardice. For in-

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stance, I agree with those who argue that Marshall pusillanimously failed to defend the prerogatives of the Court when his colleague Samuel Chase was being impeached by the Jeffersonians in 1805. At that time (though Newmyer doesn't tell us) Marshall, contrary to his holding in *Marbury* v. *Madison* (1803), was prepared to lodge the power of judicial review in Congress, not the courts.

Moreover, the piece of federal legislation Marshall found unconstitutional in *Marbury* was the law giving the Court jurisdiction to grant relief to a litigant who had been wronged by the Jeffersonians' refusal to deliver a commission for federal office. Thus, when Marshall exercised judicial review in *Marbury* and ruled, on what have come to be seen as questionable grounds, that he had no jurisdiction, he deftly avoided a confrontation with the President. That was the first and last time Marshall's Court ever voided a federal statute. Marshall picked his battles carefully and appears only to have moved against state legislation in *Dartmouth College*, *McCulloch*, and *Gibbons* when he knew that strong interests supported his decisions and, therefore, that they would be carried out.

Even so, I came away from this biography touched by Marshall's sagacity, his humility, and—*mirabile dictu*—his piety. This is not the Marshall that William Brennan would have recognized, but it may be as close as we are likely to get to the real one. The paleoconservative legal proposition, borrowed from the Federalists, is that there can be no order without law, no law without morality, and no morality without religion—to which John Marshall, as the leader of the Virginia Federalists, would have assented. If Newmyer's book, like other Marshall biographies, veers toward hagiography, then hagiography, after all, is the literary form appropriate to writing about a saint.

Stephen B. Presser is the Raoul Berger professor of legal history at Northwestern University School of Law, a professor of business law at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management, and the legal-affairs editor for Chronicles.

Talking Person

by Jeremy Lott

Now Let Me Tell You What I Really Think
by Chris Matthews
New York: The Free Press; 220 pp., $25.00

◆

Most political junkies in the United States are at least marginally familiar with Chris Matthews. The dust-jacket of his most recent book—with a goofy, grinning Matthews in suit and tie superimposed over an image of the Capital dome—is meant to jog these people's memories as they browse the local Barnes & Noble: *Oh yeah, there's that guy from MSNBC who talks a million miles a minute.* And talk, he does (and talk, and talk).

"Five nights a week" (as Matthews says several times in *Now Let Me Tell You What I Really Think*), he wears his guests down not by condescending to them (like Peter Jennings) or yelling at them (*à la* Bill O'Reilly) but by speaking in such rapid-fire bursts that they, and the audience, have to struggle to keep up. His machine-gun mouth has been his greatest asset.

However, since the format of Matthews' show is more interrogative than polemical, and since his previous books—*Hardball* and *Kennedy & Nixon*—were not manifestos, many listeners and guests began to speculate on where he stands politically. This book is about "forfeiting my *Miranda* rights" by responding to those speculations. As he says, "*everything* I say will be used against me."

After reading the book, I can only wonder if it is meeting a real need. It isn't as if your average dullard couldn't accurately pigeonhole Matthews after pursuing the voluminous and publicly available clues. Matthews is a practicing Catholic from a working-class background. He served in the Peace Corps in Africa rather than go to Vietnam. He worked for Democrats on Capitol Hill, wrote speeches for Jimmy Carter, and was one of Tip O'Neill's top aides. He got his start in journalism at the *New Republic* under the aegis of then-editor Hendrick Hertzberg. His syndicated column, though more reportorial in tone, reserves most of

Syzygy

Catharine Savage Brosman

Sun, earth, and moon aligned tonight
in crystal winter cold—first teasing us,
the sun descending in a rose farewell,
the moon in coppery fullness rising
from the river, just beyond the bridges,
hanging for an hour among the lights,
then creeping toward its rendezvous.
The way the soft penumbra lessens

makes me think of time, unnoticed
nearly, till one sees that it is waning;
so the moon appears, as if its edge
were etched by acid, nibbled evenly.
As the silver disk ascends to zenith,
I must circle with it, changing places
at the windows, pivoting, and finally
kneeling by the glass—to see the half-
moon, then a quarter, then a solitary
slice; and I, a poet and a lunar spirit,
frenzied with the spectacle, imagine
how a mortal felt his flesh turn cold
with fright, to see the heavenly lamp
extinguished, as the angels chattered
in anticipation of renascent light. It's
done: Diana is eclipsed. "Come now,"

I beckon to my cat, who does not seem
excited being a philosopher. "I've had
enough of cosmic comedy. The actors
must be tired. Goodnight! Our minds
are well aligned; our dreams will play
in a proscenium with suns and planets
tumbling in the shadows, juggling stars,
laughing all the way to God's own stage."

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its fire for the GOP and most of its constructive criticism for the Democrats. If it walks like a liberal, quacks like a liberal, and votes like a liberal . . .

The features that keep the book entertaining are the same ones that keep the television show mildly so: the often dead-on political analysis, the biographical disclosures, and the occasional intemperate outbursts. Here, for instance, is Matthews on the kind of candidate the public prefers in presidential elections: While political scientists attempt to use sophisticated models, Matthews' model "has just one variable: Look for the candidate you picture with the sun in his face."

> I present you a slide show:
>
> FDR arriving in his open roadster to visit the troops.
>
> Harry Truman giving 'em hell from the back of a train.
>
> Ike riding down the canyons of Wall Street, the ticker tape streaming down from the high floored windows, his hands raised up with the V-sign, his smile as wide as Kansas.

The point, colorfully made, is that Americans prefer active candidates to desk jockeys. These populist instincts helped Matthews call the third presidential debate of 2000 for George W. Bush over Al Gore, in defiance of elite opinion. "The media cognoscenti had made their call," he writes. "Gore had not only won, he had cleaned Bush's clock!" However, both Matthews and

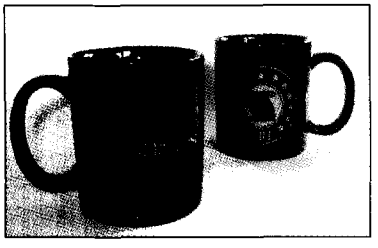
> [t]he debate audience preferred the notion of having a guy in the White House who often spoke English as if it were his second language to one who spoke to us as if English were *our* second language.

For someone who went out of his way to avoid active military service in Vietnam, Matthews is surprisingly hard on the former Soviet Union and its useful idiots in the United States. At one point he asks, "Why do I still hate the Communists?" The answer is as nationalistic and biographical as it is moral and deftly manages to rope the antiwar left in with the Kremlin: "Because we could have lost it all to them." All that time under his desk for air-raid drills, overseen by Sister Mary Somebody-or-Other, appears to have left an indelible impression.

Reading the chapter "Truth," in which Matthews sounds off on various pressing issues of concern, I wished that his Jesuit education had left a still stronger impression. On abortion, Matthews writes that polls showing "the American people will not exact a token punishment from a woman who seeks an abortion" should tell pro-lifers "something very basic." "The criminal code," he opines, "is not the right instrument here." Rather, the solution is for foes of abortion to make common cause with proponents to find ways to reduce the numbers of abortions while keeping abortion constitutionally protected. Safe, legal, *and* rare, remember?

Most of what Matthews "really thinks" is just as muddled as his alleged thinking on abortion. His politics "begin and end" with freedom, but not the freedom to opt out of Social Security or Medicaid or any other vote-buying handouts. Reparations for slavery are bad, but not if they are called "affirmative action." Republicans should welcome gay-rights crusaders with open arms, even if that is unlikely to get them enough gay votes to replace the fundamentalist voters they will lose. AIDS in Africa is somehow a pressing

The *Chronicles*/Rockford Institute Coffee Mug



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matter of American national security.

A line is often arbitrarily drawn between "writing people" and "talking people." The former are said to be more thoughtful and methodical and thus better suited to columns and longer essays; the latter, more dramatic and abrupt—more suited to radio and television. When a book idea is pitched to a talking person, a ghostwriter often has to translate the bombast into something coherent and readable. This time around, Matthews, a talking person's talking person, might have been wise to heed that convention.

Jeremy Lott is coauthor (with the Rev. Dr. Lawrence VanBeek) of the forthcoming The Case for Enoch.

Talkin' 'bout My Generation

by Paul Gottfried

Blinded by the Right:
The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative
by David Brock
New York: Crown; 336 pp., $25.95

◆

Reading this account of David Brock's journey from the "bigoted" right to a left-liberal politics that allows him to embrace his homosexuality was no kind of pleasure. Luminous observations in the book are few and far between, while betwixt them are ponderous revelations pertaining to David's sexual awakening, his relations with a "blond blue-eyed dreamboat of the Brad Pitt variety," and those (mostly tortured, except perhaps in the case of liberal Democratic scandalmonger Sidney Blumenthal, whom Brock profoundly but inexplicably respects) involving other acquaintances. By the end of his confessions, the only people who appear likable are David's parents—decent ethnic Catholics who made the mistake of adopting him and subsequently puzzled over whom or what they had reared.

The "right" that blinded Brock was in fact exclusively neoconservative. His eyesight started to fail with the onset of his sympathy for Jeane Kirkpatrick, who had been prevented by student activists from speaking at Berkeley during Brock's student days there, and with his discovery of the "intellectual vigor and fiery polemics" in *Commentary* (contrasting with the "foppish Anglophile bent of *National Review* and *American Spectator*"). Brock's connection to Laura Ingraham, a wannabe neocon TV personality who had been Dinesh D'Souza's girlfriend at Dartmouth, seems to border on the erotic but never quite makes it there. (Apparently, Brock broke with Ingraham partly or entirely because of an anti-gay screed she had published while in college.) The minicons whom Brock describes, though geeks, are not comfortable with "ideas." The world of the *Washington Times*, into which Brock was plunged at the age of 23, closely corresponds to my memories of the same "movement" publication in the middle and late 80's. Particularly apt is Brock's description of the vain, aging editor, Arnaud de Borchgrave, a "name-dropping" Belgian with a much younger wife, who spent hours each day in his sumptuous office doing sit-ups and crisping his face in front of a tanning lamp. John Podhoretz, for whom Brock went to work at *Insight*, was "a big disappointment, a know-it-all with the looks, manners, and all the subtlety of John Belushi." While his neocon contemporaries at the *Times* and elsewhere were proud of their smarts, Brock finds no evidence that they had any. They lived in a rumor mill inhabited by "our people," and, from 1992 forward, "practiced a brand of attack politics that required no alternative vision to Clintonism."

Particularly interesting are the passages Brock devotes to James Atlas's February 1995 cover story for the *New York Times Magazine* on the "new conservative elite." In "Look Who's the 'Opinion Elite' Now," Atlas, after consultation with Brock, talked up the minicons in a story featuring the tagline "They're young, brainy, and ambitious—an adversarial band of conservatives winning the war against liberalism and having a grand old time." In this narrative with accompanying photos, which eventually found its way, with minor variations, into *Fortune* and the *National Enquirer*, Atlas depicted a rising generation of neocon journalists, publishing-house editors, and Republican speechwriters who allegedly were moving American politics rightward. Atlas declared the "culture of the conservative elite" to be "a lot more like [that of] the liberal elite than the fundamentalist heartland [they] fronted for." At the time, Brock luxuriated in this culture of "professional women, Jews, and gays," though as early as 1995, he indicates, he was unhappy with the "meanness" he discerned among them. Eventually, the cumulative effect of their attack-dog techniques and sneering homophobic remarks drove him over to the other side of the Beltway's ideological divide.

The account of the rising conservative "opinion elite" that Atlas provided, with assistance from Brock, is uniformly flattering, including the pretentious photos that decorate this puff piece. If Brock and Atlas, as they claimed, harbored misgivings about their partly shared circle, these are not apparent from the *Times* cover story—nor from the spinoffs in other liberal newspapers. Brock fitted hand-in-glove with what he confesses to have been his exclusive company; even now, he cannot resist mentioning how "honored" and "grateful" he feels that such "sober venues" as *Commentary* and the *Wall Street Journal* deigned to publish him. For all his assertions about his erstwhile colleagues, there is nothing here to suggest that Brock noticed their cerebral deficiency until he had changed sides. Equally significant, he misrepresents his connection to the Washington Times Corporation, which supplied him with a sinecure while he was writing his exposé of Anita Hill. There, Brock was never, like most of the other young staff members, a drudge but the protégé of the neocon magnates who ran—and still run—the *Times* establishment. His swipes at the Reverend Moon, as the mad theocrat on whom the editors of the *Times* fawned, are for effect only: Although the Unification Church pays expenses and salaries at the Washington Times Corporation, neither Moon nor his "church" does anything more than foot the bills, as Sam Francis and I learned while working there. Neocons relentlessly run everything else.

Finally, the term "third generation," which Brock and his pals bandy about, is a glaring misnomer. It is hard to figure out what third generation they could represent, except possibly as descendants of immigrants arrived at Ellis Island. Brock's *copains* certainly do not represent the third generation of any discernible "conservative movement" tracing back to the 1950's; rather, their political views place them considerably to the left of most self-identified liberals 50 years ago. Least of all do these youths speak as the third generation of an anti-New Deal or McCarthyite right, which they would repu-

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diate as neo-Nazi. Rather, they are the scions and hangers-on of the neoconservatives who took over and transformed American conservatism in the late 70's and early 80's.

Pathetically, Brock and his ilk lament that they have not (yet) produced "classics" on the order of Irving Kristol's and Norman Podhoretz's writings, while swooning over Midge Decter ("as formidable a thinker and writer as Norman"). You might conclude from such encomia that the "classics" referred to are on a level with the works of Plato and Aristotle. But then, such judgments may be relative. After plodding through David Brock's yammering, even I might be inclined to mistake the temper tantrums of Norman or Midge for timeless thought.

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A Fine Excess

by J.O. Tate

Going to See the Elephant: Pieces of a Writing Life
by George Garrett;
edited by Jeb Livingood
Huntsville: Texas Review Press;
195 pp., $18.95

◆

The author of these various pieces can truly claim that he has lived "a writing life." George Garrett has been working—successfully—for decades as a novelist and short-story writer, as a poet, playwright, and essayist, and as an editor and satirist. But there is even more to the writing life, which Garrett does not fail to address in all the fullness, and sometimes fulsomeness, of its postmodern reality.

He views his subject from many perspectives: the personal (in accounts, such as his interview with Madison Smartt Bell, that demonstrate his mastery of the literary trade and his own processes of composition); the generational ("How the Cookie Crumbles: Note on a Literary Generation"); and, finally, in terms of personalities and individual achievements (the "Other Voices" of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eudora Welty, Fred Chappell, James Dickey, Madison Jones, and William Goyen). Garrett's breadth of coverage is impressive and satisfying, but there is a something more, an extra quality, that gives his pages a special lift. Exactly what that something might be should be known to readers of this journal, Professor Garrett's "Cowboys and Indians: A Few Notions About Creative Writing," having appeared in the May 2002 issue of *Chronicles*. In that essay, Garrett told some home truths about creative writing and the contemporary American university in a piece that was rejected by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, whose editors did not approve of the opinions that they had solicited. They found indigestible his polite and rational account of the contradiction between the nature of creative writing and the demands of a politically correct bureaucracy. But George Garrett's knowledge—as well as the honesty manifested in that statement—are not the whole of the X-factor that distinguishes his writing.

In discussing the duty of the storyteller, Garrett reminds us of Keats' phrase for surprise in poetry: "a fine excess."

> To create something new and worthwhile, to surprise by "a fine excess," question all stereotypes, good ones and bad ones, and the shadow assumptions behind them. Turn the full force of your own doubts and skepticism against the commonplace assumptions of your age and, most especially, against your own personal certainties and assumptions.

It seems to me that, in these pages as in others, George Garrett has done just that. He can remember when the parabolas of Hemingway and Fitzgerald and Faulkner seemed near and accessible, when

> Being a writer then became going to war and living to tell the tale, going on safari and shooting lions and other big animals, skinny-dipping in the fountain in front of the Plaza Hotel, and living in a crumbling cobwebby old Southern mansion.

But now he knows, as he tells us, that the gap between the generations is bigger than it once seemed, and the writing game has changed more than a little.

Because of his achieved perspective and his ability to invert stereotypes, Garrett writes shrewdly about F. Scott Fitzgerald and effectively about Truman Capote, perceiving the artistic strength as well as the authorial self-mythologization coexisting in *In Cold Blood*. Recognizing distinction when he sees it, he celebrates the poetic craft of Fred Chappell and pauses to remark, as he places him in context, "One of the great problems we face in much contemporary American poetry is in its trendy insistence on a central core of unearned nihilism." Garrett knows what to say, even in the face of lies and provocative absurdities, about James Dickey, separating the man from his work. In short, *Going to See the Elephant* is a valuable and enjoyable collection that speaks to the literary experience of the last two generations and to our present sense that something has gone wrong. But, like Vanessa Williams, I have saved the best for last.

"The best" is the ultimate extension of the principle of "a fine excess" or, perhaps, what we might think of as "negative capability." Precisely because he is a charming gentleman in his own person, George Garrett the writer is necessarily *someone else*. And that someone else is sometimes "John Towne," the persona of *Poison Pen* (1986), an irrepressible voice of all that is repressed. John Towne tells it like it is, usually lusting after the supermodel celebs he mocks and insulting Howard Stern for his ugliness. In these pages, John Towne addresses the students of the University of Virginia in a highly original and instructive manner hitherto unknown to the president and deans of that admirable institution. He rudely interrupts the discourse of Garrett's essay, "When Lorena Bobbitt Comes Bob-Bob-Bobbing Along: The Sorry State of Popular Culture"—or perhaps we should say that Towne's rude interruptions turn that essay into a dramatization of, rather than a statement about, the sorry state of popular culture. And in "False Confessions," Towne bitterly complains about how Garrett has used him and abused him. The incursions of John Towne across the borders of discursive distinction and tonal probity are proofs—as if they were needed—that, when George Garrett addresses the writing life, we must be there to attend.

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by Samuel Francis

Immigration Reform's New "Palatable Face"

Almost immediately after the attacks of September 11, the open-borders lobby knew it was in trouble. The immediate, obvious, and logical implication of 19 aliens legally entering the country and proceeding to carry out the biggest single act of mass murder in human history is that the United States needs to close its borders, at least for a while. The attacks ought also to have suggested that our immigration policies are seriously flawed and in need of radical reform and that allowing literally millions of aliens to pass through our borders virtually at will creates not only security threats but a vast range of other problems.

Most Americans did indeed perceive these implications of the September 11 attacks, but for the last several months, proponents of mass immigration have fought to smother in its political cradle any effort at reform to which these perceptions might have given birth. The lobby has followed essentially three tactics, each of which is an enhancement of tactics it used before September 11: first, concede the need for some reform (especially in such merely procedural matters as visa security, screening of foreign visitors, and expelling expired visa holders) while avoiding and opposing any and all comprehensive immigration-control measures such as a moratorium or drastic and permanent reductions in numbers of immigrants; second, continue to smear those who have actively supported immigration control as "racists," "extremists," etc., to prevent them from gaining legitimacy or influence through their claims that September 11 proved that they had been right all along about the dangers of immigration; and third, posture as the true or "responsible" advocates of real and effective immigration reform whose efforts are in danger of being hijacked and discredited by the aforementioned "extremists." So faithfully have these tactics been followed by a series of apparently unconnected opponents of immigration control that I would be tempted, if I did not know better, to posit an actual conspiracy among them to pursue a common and concerted plan.

The reason for the urgency that the open-borders zealots felt was expressed by Tamar Jacoby, whose article in the March *Reader's Digest*, "Don't Slam the Door," generally follows the tactics described above. "Phones rang off the hook at radio call-in shows," Miss Jacoby panted in her depiction of the national reaction to September 11.

> Angry messages flooded Internet chat rooms. Members of Congress soon joined in, demanding that the country freeze all visas for six months, even station troops and tanks on the borders.

Most Americans probably have no recollection of the sort of xenophobic hysteria she portrays, but readers should recall that Miss Jacoby, a denizen of Manhattan, perhaps harbors a somewhat overwrought view of the national heartland and spies beasts lurking there that few others can see. Nevertheless, allowing for some exaggeration, she is certainly correct that most Americans did grasp that the reckless mass-immigration policy of the federal government was at least indirectly responsible for September 11 and were furious in their demands that it be rectified. As she pointed out, a Fox News/Opinion Dynamics poll found that 65 percent of the public favored "temporarily sealing the U.S. borders and stopping all immigration" until the war against terrorism is over.

Miss Jacoby, however, was by no means the first of the pro-immigration warriors to roll into battle against the popular demand for immigration restrictions. That distinction probably belongs to a gentleman named Stephen Steinlight of the American Jewish Committee, who unbosomed his thoughts to a large audience in New York on November 14 in a speech entitled, "The Jewish Stake in America's Changing Demography." Mr. Steinlight's argument was that American Jews, who have traditionally been in the forefront of support for liberal immigration policies, should rethink their position, not just because of September 11, but because

> we cannot consider the inevitable consequences of current trends [in immigration]—not least among them *diminished Jewish political power*—with detachment. . . . We have an enormous stake in the outcome of this process, and we should start acting as if we understood that we do.

Steinlight explicitly endorsed what he called "a pro-immigrant policy of lower immigration," mainly out of consideration of the interests of his own religious and ethnic group, but not at the expense of embracing what he called the

> white "Christian" supremacists who have historically opposed either all immigration or all non-European immigration (Europeans being defined as Nordic or Anglo-Saxon), a position re-asserted by Peter Brimelow.

Mr. Brimelow, author of *Alien Nation*, which virtually all sides of the immigration controversy acknowledge as the most significant recent book arguing against mass immigration, soon became the demon of choice for the post-September 11 open-borders witch hunters. Indeed, while Mr. Steinlight's insulting and false characterization of him and his book in the published version of his speech was rude enough, the notes of a member of the audience make clear that the speaker did not hesitate to indulge in a little ethnic name-calling as well. Mr. Steinlight described *Alien Nation* as "a book I abominate; it is entirely objectionable and racist" and called Mr. Brimelow "a Brit continuing cultural Buchananism with a British accent." He also cast aspersions on Mr. Brimelow's character—"I'm honest; he's not"—and motives

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(Brimelow contributes to a "brutal ethnocentrism").

Mr. Steinlight's speech set the tone of tolerance and enlightenment for the "debate" on immigration that quickly ensued, and the next installment popped up in a conference on "Immigration and National Security," sponsored by neoconservative David Horowitz's Center for the Study of Popular Culture and held in Washington, D.C., on January 29. Unlike Mr. Steinlight, the Horowitz cabal was civil enough and refrained from insults and ethnic slurs against those who disagreed with it, and it even offered some speakers who called for substantial reductions in immigration. Nevertheless, what was most remarkable about the conference was the total absence of the most prominent and active advocates of immigration reform in the country. Not only was Mr. Brimelow not invited, but neither was Roy Beck of Numbers USA, Glenn Spencer of Citizens United, Wayne Lutton of *The Social Contract*, Dan Stein of FAIR, John Vinson of Americans for Immigration Control, or any of a host of others long actively engaged in the immigration debate. As Mr. Horowitz described the purpose of his conference to a mutual friend, the point was "to put a more palatable face on immigration reform," which is simply neoconspeak for co-opting the mainstream immigration-reform movement and turning it to neoconservative goals and purposes.

Indeed, the Horowitz conference even adopted some of the same codewords that Mr. Steinlight had used in his address in New York a few months before. Mr. Steinlight endorsed what he called the "patriotic assimilation" of immigrants, and the Horowitz conference also used the phrase to describe what seems to be a kind of intensive brainwashing course for immigrants in the do's and don't's of the Credal Nation dogmas so beloved of neoconservatives. Mr. Steinlight also inveighed against bilingual education and insisted that immigrants learn and speak English; this, too, popped up as a permissible reform among several speakers at the Horowitz gathering.

Mostly, however, the speakers at the Horowitz conference were careful to rehearse all the approved mantras of the open-borders lobby itself, regardless of what reductions in numbers or demands for assimilation they supported. Immigration has always been a good thing; we're a nation of immigrants; America is based on a creed; immigration brings a valuable mix of different peoples (though there's really no difference among different peoples); diversity is a good thing (though immigrants need to assimilate); assimilation is happening (though left-wing multiculturalist elites won't let it happen); most immigrants want to assimilate. Even speakers who clearly supported more drastic reductions in numbers of legal immigrants were careful to wrap their remarks in this kind of rhetoric, which grants the pro-immigration premises that the open-borders lobby wants to govern the entire discussion of the immigration issue.

Similar installments of pseudoreform quickly followed, one of the more notable being a vicious little piece of journalistic sheep-dip penned by Jonah Goldberg of *National Review* in the *Los Angeles Times*, which complained that "ideologues" (*i.e.*, Peter Brimelow, Pat Buchanan, and, I'm proud to say, I) "have hijacked an important debate." The "debate" we hijacked, of course, is the one in which such luminaries as Mr. Goldberg claim to have been engaged before we proponents of "racial gloom-and-doom ideologies" sneaked into the airplane with our verbal box-cutters at the ready. Buchanan's arguments against immigration in his recent *Death of the West* have "marginalized the entire debate about immigration at the exact moment that the issue needs all the intelligent discussion it can get," Mr. Goldberg spouted. This, indeed, is quite rich. When did Mr. Goldberg ever express any interest whatsoever in immigration control before September 11 and the surge of grassroots demands for it? What does he have to contribute to the "debate" now, other than ugly *ad hominem* attacks on those who have sought a real debate for years? Like Mr. Steinlight and the worthies of the Horowitz conference, Mr. Goldberg has only the most tepid recommendations—criminals shouldn't be allowed to immigrate, nor should illegal immigrants be accepted. "We need to respond," Mr. Goldberg intrepidly demands, "to the fact that the president of Mexico is developing political constituencies on both sides of the border to influence politics on both sides of the border." How "we" should "respond" he never says, though I, for one among the gentlemen he attacks, have written numerous columns opposing it for years. When has Mr. Goldberg ever mentioned it before?

The Goldberg onslaught makes clear what is going on, even if the earlier installments of "palatable" immigration control did not. The September 11 attacks raised public awareness of the insanity of our open-border policies, and it soon became obvious that mass immigration might be in trouble from populist political forces that the American ruling class cannot control and its neoconservative stalwarts cannot co-opt. Therefore, those who have been demanding immigration control for years—Peter Brimelow, Pat Buchanan, *et al.*—must be demonized, lest the nation begin listening to what they have been saying. Moreover, simply crushing all immigration control, as the lobby has successfully done for decades, wouldn't work anymore, so some fairly innocuous concessions have to be accepted and—at the same time that experienced, knowledgeable, and well-known critics of mass immigration are demonized—a new crowd of pseudocritics has to be deployed to do the demonizing and offer the policy concessions. Those following these tactics were by no means confined to the few mentioned so far. Neoconservative Paul Greenberg first attacked Buchanan (mainly for his 1992 speech at the Republican National Convention, writing that "the hate was thick enough to cut, and the mob—I mean the crowd [actually, he means the Republican delegates]—loved it") and then got around to immigration. (Like Mr. Goldberg, Mr. Greenberg is not exactly famous for a long record of thought and writing on the immigration issue, but that didn't stop him from pronouncing on what should and shouldn't be done: A moratorium, even for six months, is in the category of "bad ideas"; creating "a unified agency to guard the borders" is a good idea, as, to the neoconservative mind, any and all enhancement of government power always is.)

This onslaught against the new grassroots movement for effective immigration control will probably succeed. Not only does it offer the mirage of success and acceptability to a movement desperate for any victory, it has the support of the American ruling class, which demands mass immigration as a new proletarian power base. September 11 was, in a grim and unwelcome way, an opportunity to achieve the radical reforms needed to control and reduce mass immigration, but thanks to the tactics of smear and co-option deployed by the neoconservatives, it's likely to be an opportunity missed.

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by Scott P. Richert

De Profundis

In recent months, as horrifying allegations of homosexual and pedophiliac activities among Catholic priests in the United States have multiplied, the response of the American Church has been, to say the least, disheartening. Remarks by Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston, Roger Cardinal Mahoney of Los Angeles, and Francis Cardinal George of Chicago have clouded the issue. Amid the turmoil, the words of Bishop Thomas Doran of Rockford, the second-largest diocese in Illinois, have seemed a "voice crying in the wilderness." Writing in the February 22 issue of the *Observer*, the newspaper of the Rockford diocese, Bishop Doran condemned clerical sexual abuse in no uncertain terms:

> The words of Christ regarding those who harm the innocence of children are to be before our minds as we think about these things. "It would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea". . . I say without fear of contradiction that every priest who so violates the confidence placed into his hands at ordination by molesting children or adolescents sexually or in any other way or for any purpose should suffer that fate.

Since no allegations of sexual abuse have emerged in the Rockford diocese, it is tempting to say that, finally, Rockford has found an area in which it is not simply average, but to do so would be to join the media frenzy. While Bishop Doran is one of shining lights in the American Church and his statement is far and away the best, most hard-hitting commentary on the scandal released by any American prelate, the truth is that Rockford is typical of American dioceses. Now that the allegations of abuse have largely played themselves out, two conditions have emerged: First, the number of priests accused of abuse amounts to about one quarter of one percent of all active Roman Catholic priests in the United States (and, since many of the accused priests are retired, that percentage is on the high side); second, plotting the alleged cases of abuse on a map reveals a United States that is far more divided than the red/blue America of the 2000 presidential election. Allegations of abuse have been confined largely to the East and West Coasts; most of the cases in between are found in large urban dioceses. (In this, the Archdiocese of Chicago seems the exception. Joseph Cardinal Bernadin moved aggressively, during the last round of scandal a decade ago, to institute strict guidelines for dealing with such allegations; this time around, the media has had to dig up old cases to bring Chicago into the story.)

Unlike some American prelates, who have used the scandal as an excuse for attacking the Church itself, Bishop Doran, a superb canon lawyer and former advisor to Pope John Paul II, points out in a later column in the *Observer* that "the rules of conduct and the moral standards which bind bishops forbid" the reassignment of priests known to have abused children and warns that "these events, which are in themselves disgusting and horrible beyond words, will now be politicized by people in the church with different points of view":

> Those on one side will use it to condemn the Church's discipline of celibacy saying that a celibate priesthood is responsible for this. . . . [I]n fact, the best science today tells us the crime of pedophilia is quite unrelated to anyone's station in life.

More disturbing, perhaps, are conservative or traditionalist attacks on the Church:

> there are those who will say these crimes are proof of the laxity with which men are admitted to the seminary and priesthood—in spite of the fact that seminaries and dioceses and religious congregations have been very careful to assess the proclivities of those who apply for admission to our ranks.

Attacks from the right are often bound up with a smug moralism, which manifests itself in a desire to make the scandal seem even more widespread than it is. *Chronicles* contributing editor Philip Jenkins, whose 1996 book *Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Contemporary Crisis* has been cited in Vatican documents, has been accused of downplaying the seriousness of the scandal because he insists on placing the allegations in context. (You can read his response to those accusations at *www.ChroniclesMagazine.org*.)

In the end, however, the turmoil in the Church comes down to one thing: the persistence of evil. As Bishop Doran writes:

> Sometimes people's intentions are good. They look the other way, or they misjudge the nature of the problem. That was, it must be said, once the case with respect to pedophiles. Not so many decades ago the best science said their obsession could be cured, or at least treated and brought under control, in the same way that people can be freed from the snares of alcoholism and drug addiction. . . .
>
> Now we know better. . . . [W]e all must join together in beseeching God to make us duly conscious of the monstrosity of this evil.

Unfortunately, some American prelates still show no sign that they understand that sin is a condition that can only be treated by true repentance, not psychology, and that some temptations are so powerful that the only reliable way to keep from giving in to them is to avoid the occasion of sin. Let us pray that Bishop Doran, who clearly understands that the wisdom of Christianity has not been trumped by modern psychology and liberalism, may be a beacon for his fellow bishops.

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Letter From Pakistan

by Doug Bandow

Dubious Allies

◆

"We love our children, but we need food," says Masih Saddiq, a 50-year-old brickmaker, explaining why none of his 13 children were in school. They range in age from one-and-a-half to 25; all seem destined to spend their entire lives making bricks, as have their parents.

The brickyard sits outside central Lahore, Pakistan's second-most populous city. Owned by a Muslim, it employs several Christian families, all of whom live on his land in a makeshift brick village. The homes are crammed together, with head-high outer walls creating a narrow alley. Most homes consist of two rooms, with a small enclosed courtyard. Even the makeshift toilets are enclosed by bricks. Occasional mats or rugs cannot hide the dirt floors; dust hangs in the air. There is no electricity or running water.

Families usually work together, typically 12 hours a day, six days a week. Each group stakes a plot of land: About a dozen families cover the equivalent of a half-dozen football fields. One person digs up the clay and wets it; another fills a cart to move it. Two or three others pack the clay into molds.

The bricks are then left to dry before being fired through burial on top of an enormous furnace—a furnace into which brickmakers have occasionally fallen when the roof has given way. Finished bricks are then stacked, row after row, for the owner's representative to count. Average production is 2,500 to 3,000 bricks a day, at a price of 140 rupees per thousand. Families earn six or seven dollars a day.

Life is hard; the work is interminable. "We have no other choice, no other job," says one worker. Saddiq's family, with eight sons and five daughters, has labored in this brickyard for 15 years. Most of these families are effectively indentured servants. It is "like slavery," explains the Rev. Emanuel S. Khokha, the 41-year-old pastor of a Methodist church in Lahore. Most of the families have borrowed heavily from the brickyard owner—20,000 or 30,000 rupees for a dowry, for instance. They must work off the debt, which never seems to end.

Some residents are even more vulnerable. Two orphaned girls, seven and ten, live with their grandparents. They work in the brickyard. One 95-year-old widow recently lost her husband. Unable to work, she lives with her children, who now struggle with one fewer pair of hands.

Yet their faith lives. Says Saddiq, "I have a strong faith in Jesus Christ. We're happy in this situation also." Not all brickmakers are Christians. But Christians, who make up just two percent of the population, account for a disproportionate share. They are uniquely vulnerable to abuse in a society where discrimination is pervasive.

Persecution of Christians is hardly unusual, but it is noteworthy that America's chief ally in the "war on terrorism" so brutally oppresses those most favorably inclined toward the United States. Khokha expresses his faith boldly, meeting us at the airport dressed in his collar and sporting an *ichthus* pin. Even before September 11, Christians were seen as believing in an alien god. "They blame us because Christians are linked to America," explains Khokha. "They blame us for Israel and the problem with the Palestinians. And they blame us because we are Christians." Some Muslims have claimed that Pepsi stands for "pay every penny, support Israel." Life has grown much worse since last fall. "In the Afghan war, one mosque was destroyed by bombing, and Muslim scholars preached, we will destroy the churches in Pakistan," observes Khokha. "Why?" he asks. "We are Pakistanis, and this church belongs to Pakistan. But they say, they are Christians, and you are Christians." Nevertheless, he does not despair: "Praise the Lord. He is using us to testify in our country. Christians here have a strong faith." He adds "We are serving the Lord with gladness. We are happy in God's plans."

Pakistan is a series of dual societies, with obvious economic stratification. The capital of Islamabad sports wide, tree-lined boulevards, fine government buildings, and a sold-out luxury Marriott Hotel. But the "economy is very low," says the Reverend Khokha, and far more people are suffering, especially after the start of the war in Afghanistan. Christians, in particular, "tend to live in slum areas," says Khokha. Down a nearby ravine sits a tent city of 66 Christian families whose mud homes were washed away a couple years ago. Blankets serve as doors; canvas occasionally acts as a floor. Makeshift latrines drain into a ditch.

Pakistan has long alternated between dictatorial and democratic rule. Today, the military, in the person of Pervez Musharraf, is in charge. Democracy remains the professed goal of most people, including Musharraf. But Nawaz Sharif, the ousted prime minister, is in exile, and his predecessor, Benazir Bhutto, has seen her husband jailed on corruption charges. Many Westerners fear that elections might bring Islamic radicals to power.

Asked to compare Musharraf, Sharif, and Bhutto, Shagufta Irene Samuel, general manager of the Technical Services Association (TSA), a Christian rehabilitation organization, says that Musharraf "is the best. I think he is very democratic." She had "large expectations" for his elected predecessors, but they were not met. "The politicians are ruining the whole country." Still, on many day-to-day issues, when it comes to the treatment of Christians, Khokha complains that "it doesn't matter which government. They are all the same."

Religious tensions are equally obvious. Pakistan is formally an "Islamic Republic," governed by *sharia*. Mosques abound, and copies of the Koran replace the Gideon Bible in hotels.

For many, this is only a matter of appearance. A nattily dressed elite wears Western clothes; teens wear jeans and cargo pants (but never shorts or short-sleeved shirts). These Pakistanis ignore the call to prayer as it wafts across their neighborhoods, and they travel overseas to almost any destination except on a Haj. They join Americans in dining at Pizzeria Uno.

This is the Pakistan that supports Pervez Musharraf in his quest for a more secular state. But there is another Pakistan evident even in Islamabad, and especially in a city like Peshawar, on the border with Afghanistan. Bearded men wear a

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uniform of baggy pants and shirt rather than suit; women navigate crowded streets while wearing a *burqa*.

Although Americans stand out in many foreign countries, rarely does their conspicuousness seem so dangerous. There are angry stares even on the capital's streets and in major airports. In more distant locations, hatred fills the eyes. Not that you can always see the eyes—or need to. In Peshawar, a woman in a *burqa* shouts at me and two other Westerners as we walk toward her neighborhood: "They are not Muslims; they are bad people. The Americans are not good. They are hurting our people in Afghanistan." Khokha literally pushes us back into our van: "They are dangerous people, angry people," he explains. Even in Islamabad, we find police signs, in English, announcing an "emergency service for foreigners."

"Discrimination is everywhere," a resident of one poor neighborhood tells me. It begins with children and extends through school, work, government, and the rest of life. Kids "don't want to be friends with Christians," one 12-year-old says. Even when allowed to attend school, Christians are isolated and ignored. Sometimes teachers will tell them "you are not good," complains one parent. "So school teachers will fail them. There is great discrimination." In local sports such as cricket, a Christian team is less likely to be chosen to advance.

Employment for everyone in this poor society is tenuous, but especially for Christians. Jobs are offered to Muslims first. One young resident of a poor neighborhood, where her monthly salary of $20 was a princely sum, was fired by her Muslim supervisor, who disliked her faith. She now spends her days in a two-room hovel, surrounded by others longing for work.

Charity would help, but Pakistan is not a wealthy society where private aid abounds. Moreover, what little assistance is offered tends to be restricted to Muslims. "If Christians ask for help, the Muslims say that the tithe is not for non-Muslims," Khokha explains. I met a Christian who works for a hospital administrator; even at his facility, built in part with U.S. aid, care is limited to Muslims. Impoverished Christians are often pressured to convert. Says Khokha: "When crisis comes, some poor Christians become Muslims, as Muslims say, 'then we will help you.'"

The 66 Christian families in Islamabad whose homes were destroyed by flooding can't afford new homes, and the government won't allow them to build where they are. So relief agencies have given them tents. A local Catholic church supports them sometimes. But "we get nothing from the government," one man tells me. In fact, "sometimes high officials and police come and destroy our tents, and tell us to go somewhere else," because their makeshift village is embarrassingly close to a government building and a mosque.

Foreign aid is no answer, since Islamabad directs even humanitarian assistance, and the resulting jobs and services, toward Muslims. Says Khokha: "If an international agency comes and gives support door-to-door, we can survive. But international agencies give to the government. They don't give it to us." Jobs created by foreign aid are parceled out politically: "Overseas agencies need people for labor, but no one calls us Christians. If there are jobs available, they are not calling us," says Khokha. Even money meant for private aid organizations goes elsewhere. Samuel observes that the state "doesn't help us. There is a lot of money from elsewhere, for the government and NGOs. But they never give us any clue how to get that funding. They won't even give us the forms to get it."

Discrimination pervades the political system. The electorate has long been divided between Muslims and non-Muslims. Musharraf plans to change that, but little else is likely to change. Islamabad has never been noted for its responsiveness to its citizens, and Christians have low expectations: "If a Christian wants a service in a government office, he can't get it because he is a Christian," complains Khokha. The poverty of Pakistan intensifies discrimination. "Our government is also poor, so it doesn't supply Christian people," one Christian notes. Some slights are small, while others greatly affect living standards. For instance, Pakistan's poor enjoy few property rights. Most at risk are Christians.

One community of about 60 families has spent 35 years in makeshift homes on army land in Lahore. Made of brick or stucco, with tin roofs, mud walls outside, and dirt courtyards, these homes often hold two large families. Five or more people are frequently packed into small rooms, of 100 square feet or less. Of his one-room home, one man jokes: "This is the bedroom. And the dining room. And the TV room." Others sleep outside: "There is no privacy," observes one. Sometimes rugs are used as doors to the outside.

Some residents inherited their dwellings from their parents. "Our forefathers were here before partition [of India and Pakistan in 1947]," notes Javed John, a local pastor. Yet the government refuses to provide public services: We "need a sewer line, we need a natural gas line," one man complains. Islamabad also destroyed a small church that they had built. "We want a church, but the government won't allow it," says John. Why not? "This is the army's place, not your place," one man was told. "The government wants us to go somewhere else," says John. The military said it wanted to build a plaza on the land. Yet the Muslim neighborhood next door is also on army property, and its members have been allowed to lease their land and build a mosque. "Here is a very dangerous situation," says John. "By the grace of God we are still here, as they want to remove us." If the government would offer them some other land, they would go. "But the government doesn't offer."

Even those whose ownership is not in doubt cannot get services for their land. Nearby in Lahore, a group of 70 families has purchased property on installment, starting in 1993. They have built not only homes but a church. Indeed, the church was the first building that they constructed, even as they lived in tents. But the roads are dirt and animals, including a cow in a makeshift pen, wander the property and share courtyards with the people.

Inside their homes, residents have created a clean and warm atmosphere, highlighted by pictures of Jesus and other Christian imagery. There is no electricity, even though they sit astride a power line. Muslim neighborhoods, however, have electricity. A Muslim mausoleum lights up at night. The poultry farm next door has power. "We have applied for electricity many times," one resident tells me. But the government replied that the cost to connect would be $7,000, an impossible sum. "We just can't afford it," says one frustrated man. "The government will give electricity to chickens, but not to Christians," says another resident. "It is a terrible situation."

Yet, observes Khokha as we leave, "they have a strong faith in Jesus Christ. They have many problems, but retain a strong faith in Him."

Unfortunately, the next generation of

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Pakistani Christians will be uneducated. Only about five of the residents of this neighborhood can read. When Christian children are officially permitted to attend school, cost is a barrier for Christian families. Khokha is late to meet us one morning because a family was threatened with having its two children tossed out of school. The husband, a painter, had been injured in a work accident, so the family could not pay the $40 annual tuition for each of their two children.

Once in school, Christian children must learn and pass the subject "Islamia," which teaches the tenets of Islam. "You can't graduate without it," explains TSA's Samuel. "And if you don't take it, the tester knows you are a Christian, and you will never get through." The bottom line: Submerge your faith or suffer.

Government employment is also limited, and in Pakistan, the state is the best option in a grossly politicized economy. "Government is the best job in the world," says Khokha, but this avenue is often closed to Christians. "We apply for the jobs," even menial ones, and "we can't get them," one poor resident told me. Large bribes must be paid—10,000 or 20,000 rupees (a year's wages)— to become a street sweeper, for instance.

The natural result of such restrictions on education and employment, with few countervailing private opportunities in a state-dominated economy, is to lock the mass of Christians into poverty. Rarely do fewer than a half-dozen people rely on one worker for support. Once working, Christians can ill afford to retire. "These are the small things that we go through every day, which most people don't hear about it," says Shagufta Samuel.

On top of these severe economic restraints comes official harassment and even persecution. Christians are largely left alone in their own areas "But not outside. We can make a new church in a Christian area. But not in a Muslim one." Indeed, complains Khokha, whose congregation includes about 300 families, "Muslims call if we have a meeting, and we get persecuted."

Christians cannot count on any legal protection. Samuel's TSA provides shelter for women. "A lot of women are molested by elite people," she explains, often the families for whom they are working. "They have no place to go, and the human rights commission sends them here." Muslim women are also abused, she notes, but the system is less responsive to Christians.

Even worse is criminal prosecution. "It's terrible," explains Khokha. "Ten years ago you could pass out Christian literature, but now there's the anti-blasphemy law." When Christians handed out Operation Mobilization materials, the government "put people in jail."

Pervez Masih, a Christian teacher, was imprisoned last year after answering a student's questions about Muhammad's life (his marriage to a young girl, for instance); Masih was denounced by the administrator of a rival school. "A lot of blasphemy cases are brought against Christians," complains Samuel. But such trials are rarely reported in the media and are often conducted in secret.

Converts in Islamic Pakistan face death; for this reason, Masih Yousaf, a member of Khokha's congregation, has received political asylum in America. "He can't come back," says Khokha. Masih's wife, Elvina, and their three children remain in Lahore, fearful for their safety. "I'm afraid here," Elvina explains. "It's not safe." She lives with her 25-year-old nephew, Jabeen, whose father, a Christian convert, was murdered by a mob that pushed him off a cliff. "Everyone has a gun, everyone is angry," worries Khokha. After a significant delay, asylum has been granted and visas finally issued to Masih's family.

In March, two men killed five Christians, including two Americans, in a grenade attack on a church in Islamabad. Last October, gunmen stormed a church in Bahawalpur and slaughtered 15 Christians, including the minister. They screamed "blood for blood," apparently suggesting that the killings were in retaliation for America's war in Afghanistan.

St. Anthony's Church in Lahore has been vandalized and subjected to bomb threats; the authorities have shown little interest in intervening. A small Assemblies of God church in Islamabad was destroyed after Christmas; the government proclaimed the explosion to be the result of a gas leak, but did little to investigate. Just two days before we arrived in mid-January, says Khokha, Muslims beat a pastor and his family in a village near Lahore. Since September 11, the mood has been "very tense," observes Khokha.

Responding to intense Islamic criticism, the Musharraf regime has backed away from reforming the blasphemy law and has allowed provincial application of *sharia*. Musharraf does deserve some credit for dropping the separate electoral lists for Muslims and religious minorities: "He said that we are all Pakistanis now," explains Khokha. The Musharraf government has begun moving against the *Madrassahs*, the fundamentalist Islamic schools that have spawned so many *mujahideen*. And he seems committed to breaking the security service's ties to militants. Khokha confesses that "We praise the Lord for Musharraf. Musharraf is from God. Sharif and Bhutto couldn't do it. But Musharraf took brave steps. He banned the fundamentalists."

Pastor Javed John asks me to "Please convey the message to the American people that there are so many problems with Christians" in Pakistan. "Christian people are very poor. We need your help. Please pray for us. Support us." Christian Freedom International is attempting to help brickmaking families escape their perpetual servitude, by providing education for poor children and aiding families in need. Such small-scale initiatives can make positive improvements in real people's lives, unlike massive government-to-government aid programs.

Odd as it may seem, Pakistani Muslims are much more likely than Christians to receive a visa to visit the United States. That might not be the intent of U.S. officials, but it is the inevitable result of their policies. The federal government does not want anyone to come here who might stay, so it demands that applicants produce evidence of extensive ties to Pakistan. Since Christians tend to be at the economic bottom of Pakistani society, they have a harder time meeting U.S. requirements—to show a bank account, for instance. "A Muslim has property," says Khokha. "We don't. They say you'll stay in the U.S. In contrast, Muslims show property, business, land." And so they get visas. One of the deacons in Khokha's church has been turned down four times for a visa, despite invitations from Christian churches in America.

Islam has clearly proved, throughout most of the world, to be a religion of discrimination. The life of Christians in Pakistan is extraordinarily difficult. They need support and prayers from Christians in America and around the world. "Remember us in your prayers. Don't forget us," implores the Reverend John.

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Letter From Palermo

by Andrei Navrozov

North and South

◆

The proprietor of the restaurant M——A——, known as "Ricotta," likes to share with his intimate friends—for the most part fecund, avuncular family men who, between them, did upward of a thousand years in the high-security Section 2 of the city's thistle-shaped Ucciardone jail, awaiting trial on accusations of various victimless crimes, usually involving government building contracts, accusations that, *mirabile dictu*, invariably came to nothing—the story of his first and last visit to Venice. As I know nothing of the Sicilian dialect that he speaks—except how to inject the right note of lazy indignation in the retort "*Ma qual' Amercan'?*" whenever the taxidriver ventures, "American?"—the story is simultaneously translated into the soulless standard Italian of the mainland by several voices in the womanless crowd.

My friend Maglio explains that the Sicilian spoken by our hero is high Palermitan, which is far more different from the dialects of the countryside than, say, the sounds of Tuscany are from those of Umbria. Thus, where Ricotta refers to himself as "*io*," his social counterpart in Madonie, some 60 kilometers away, would say "*ia*"; in Salemi, 70 kilometers from the city center, he would say "*ieu*"; in Marsala, which is 30 kilometers from Salemi in the same province of Trapani, he would say "*eu*." In the province of Caltanisseta, 110 kilometers away, he would say "*iè*." In Catania, in the eastern part of the country 200 kilometers away from Palermo, he would say "*iù*."

"I guess you could say they saw me coming," Ricotta warms up to his subject, always with the same self-effacing *rallentando*. "I tell you what happened. I'd just got off at Piazzale Roma, and there's this newspaper stand right in front. So I start picking out postcards for my little ones, two hundred lire each, it said, views of Venice. I get six—one was for my wife—and what does that make? A thousand two, of course. Now, I give the fellow a thousand five, and I say to him, 'You all right with that, boy?' And straight away he hears my voice he bolts from his hole, to check how many I'd taken. Which is six."

Here Ricotta pauses to catch his breath, and, in the silence of the crowd, one hears his asthmatic lungs creaking like some terribly clever hydraulic apparatus that the ancient Romans left behind. "Then I say to him, if you're going to be like this about it, give me back my change. So the fellow turns to go back to his hole, but I'm already pretty bothered, so I pull out my knife"—Ricotta pulls out a folding knife the size of a small banana—"and I tell him, you'd better count well, you bucket of garbage, because I want my change to the last lira! So he gives me the three hundred back, and then I go *woosh!* and just toss it into the canal. It's what I did, I swear on my mother's grave that's just what I did. God knows I must've been angry by then, to have seen myself treated like some kind of criminal just because I talk as we do. And by that *garbage*!"

It is not so much the dramatic sacrifice of 15 cents in American money for the honor of his people as the evident fact that this, indeed, is the old voyager's only halfway vivid recollection of magical Venice, that elicits hoots of approbation and slaps on the shoulder from Ricotta's listeners, who fall over one another to raise upturned fingers over the back of his balding head: "*Cuinnutu!*" Yes, here's the old buck, the maverick warrior with more horns on him than a man can count, the ageless symbiosis of Minotaur and his slayer, the virile *cornuto* with masculinity all tangled up in disingenuousness, the mythic simpleton who's been to Hades and wound the infernal lot of them round his gnarled left pinkie. He may talk an even funnier Italian than the rest of them do, but *he* has never seen the inside of the Ucciardone thistle. And as for the money, no need to worry about the owner of the best fish joint in *Sette Cannoli*, or "Seven Spigots," as this part of town is called, because every jeweler in downtown Palermo knows old Ricotta's got pillowcases of the stuff stashed away, and not in lire, either.

What's in it for me, you may wonder? The Palermitan answer is: protection. For the fact is that, even after all these years spent in Italy, I'm still of a divided mind on the question of which picturesquely neglected corner of it will last the longest—and will protect me best—in the coming total eclipse of European civilization. At first, I thought it could only be Rome, which had already fallen so many times that another tumble would hardly matter. Then it was Venice, which the world had decided was sinking and hence, in all likelihood, would keep well away from. Now, a part of me feels that, in these apocalyptic times, I will need to shroud my fugitive soul in the rustic logic of proud old Ricotta and his *cornuto* companions, because Venice—Palermo's great antipode and coeval within the besieged microcosm of what is now left of the living Europe—yes, even Venice is now in peril.

The other day, the Italian parliament approved the infamous Moses Project, which involves stealing billions in state funds under the Berlusconian pretext of constructing inflatable dykes to control the Adriatic tide, a scheme that is certain to subvert the unique ecology of the Venice lagoon. That same week, a new directive from Brussels specifically forbade the selling of *germoglio* artichokes cultivated on the island of Sant'Erasmo, beloved of the locals under the name *castraure*. Well, did a single Venetian pull out his bone-handled silver fruit knife and swear vengeance on the tomb of his beloved maternal great-aunt from Sovizzo, near Montecchio, in the province of Verona? Did a single stallholder at the Rialto market shout "Judas!" as he threw a fistful of euros in the face of a passing politico? No, the gentlemen of the north among whom I've been living are too refined for violence, which explains why the town is full of lawyers. Only a thick *terrone*, a country bumpkin from the southern boondocks jabbering in his dialect, and naturally *maleducato*, would make a scene, which explains why so many healthy young men prefer selling postcards with views of Venice to growing vegetables in the Veneto.

The reliance on dialect, all but absolute throughout Sicily, is both the yardstick and the backbone of the social organism to which I look for protection as an individual. And, speaking of the backbone, the cut of beef called "*lombata*" in standard Italian is "*lombo*" in Bologna, "*roast-beef*" in Milan, and "*sotto filetto*" in Turin; in Palermo, it's "*trinca*." The "*fesa*" is called by that name only in Verona and Turin, while in Bologna and Florence, it becomes "*scannello*," "*schenello*" in Genova, "*rosa*" in Milan; in Naples, it's "*natica*," and in Palermo, it's "*sfasciatura*." The term "*pancia*" is only used by butchers in Verona, while in Florence they say "*falda*," in Milan, "*biancostato*" or "*bamborino*," in Turin, "*spez-*

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zato"; in Naples, "*pancettone*," and in Palermo, "*panza*." The part called "*reale*" is known as "*polso*" in Florence, "*matama*" in Genova, and "*fracosta*" in Rome; in Naples, it is called "*locena*," and in Palermo, it is "*spineddu*."

A recent survey conducted by the government census agency Istat, entitled "*I cittadini e il tempo libero*," has shown that 92.3 percent of all Italians are able to speak both the standard language and their local dialect. A mere 44.1 percent speak standard Italian at home, though 72 percent use it when speaking to strangers, "a vast improvement on the 1950's when only 33 percent did." Women are more reluctant then men to speak in dialect, either at home or in the presence of strangers. Nonetheless, a clear majority of the population, 52 percent, are capable of "fully expressing themselves" by means of "local language" alone.

Viewed topographically, the picture is pellucidly clear. Exclusive or predominant use of standard Italian is typical of the central provinces, with 63.2 percent, and those of the northwest, with 59.4, while in the south three out of four inhabitants "eschew the language of Dante" whenever they can help it. Florence and Tuscany score the highest, 83 percent, while Venice and the Veneto region—encouraging for one who has just signed a long lease on a palazzo at Ca' Rezzonico—rain acerbic disdain on all comers with the mainland low of 42.6 percent, lower even than the Alto Adige and Friuli. But then there's Ricotta, who can only count in Italian up to 100,000 lire for freshly made linguine with rock lobster.

So, in the cynical idiom of the duke of Mantua, *this one or that one*? Shall I stick it out, in the long term, with the well-educated, cool, and headstrong Venezia, or shall I view her as a mere holiday escapade, a shipboard romance, an afternoon in a swing in the sprawling garden of a Palladian villa in the Brenta? For I confess to have a great fear of being cuckolded by her long ere we marry—why else did the doges wed the sea every summer?—and it may be wisest to regard her with the same caution that her own fishermen reserve for her deceptively placid lagoon. Or shall I stake my all on a life with sultry Sicilia, hanging out in open-air cafés with her fathers, brothers, and sons, drinking coffee the color of her gently rounded eyes, and shouting "*Cuinnutu!*" whenever one of the men tells a wondrous tale of his exploits in some sunken Atlantis?

Perhaps I should try two-timing the both of them. Or would that be too—I don't quite know how to put it—too *Venetian*, somehow?

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Texas

by Wayne Allensworth

All the Time in the World

◆

The hawk, golden wings rustling in a stiff, cold breeze, floats above the prairie, eyeing its prey. A tiny movement in the sea of grass probably stirred the majestic beast from the powerline that served as a makeshift perch: The hawk takes to the air with a speed that defies my poor eyesight's ability to follow it through the sky.

It seems to halt in midair, its wings now spread wide, catching the currents of the invisible force that stirs the brush and ripples the waters of the nearby creek, the sky framing the scene in a background of china blue and wispy clouds, floating like ghosts in a sea of eternity.

Three longhorns stand by a fence near the powerline. The red one, his face marked with a narrow ribbon of white that looks like a desperate West Texas stream in summer, pokes his snout through the wire, turning as if to follow the course of the mighty bird of prey, as symbolic of this land in its own way as the rangy, ornery longhorns themselves.

The longhorn's glance seems like an act of acknowledgement from one king to another, though the hoofed monarch lost his plains kingdom long ago, becoming a logo for sports teams and "Cow Town" itself, instead.

Maybe he is saying goodbye.

The golden missile darts for the target and disappears from view, then is back again, heading for the powerline loft with something in its talons I can't make out.

I'm watching from the rear-view mirror, you see, and the kids are hollering at me to hurry up—we're late for Girl Scouts, or choir, or something. I can't remember what.

But the hawk takes his time. And those longhorns have all the time in the world.

Or do they? Do we?

Up ahead, the earthmovers aren't taking their time in demolishing yet another stretch of prairie, making room for Heaven-knows-what. And Heaven, existing outside our manic world of timecards and schedules and second hands and deadlines, *does* know what. I decide it's better that we don't, sigh, and speed up again.

This is no world for coasting, not even here. The roads and powerlines and radios and cell phones take care of that. They won't leave us alone.

And the schedule says that patch of ground—ugly, I guess, in the eyes of the absentee planners who bracket our lives in neat segments of manmade time—has to go, making way for a housing development (something like "Whispering Oaks," maybe) or a strip mall, one indistinguishable from thousands of others. For the planners are now making war on geography itself, rendering the habitat of the homegrown Texan as endangered as that of the hawk, unaware that his days are numbered here.

Central Standard Time, Greenwich Mean Time, Break Time!, Quality Time—whatever you call it, it amounts to No Time Left for You. And no place, either.

I'm driving too slowly again, seemingly creeping along. Though I'm a person who doesn't like to be late—I've always seen that as a breach of good manners—I just let it go. Then somebody hollers something like *Hurry up! Did you know that the so-and-so's set their clocks ahead 30 minutes so that they won't be late for anything?*

Heaven help them.

So I speed up a little and remember a friend who, having heard my mother had been ill, took some time to call me on Christmas Day. Oh, I've got time, he says, for my daughter and my wife now. Been laid off. I say we'll pray for him, and he comes back with "Thanks, but don't you all worry about me, now, I'll sign up for those classes I was meaning to take and get something better. Nothing but time, old friend." I hung up, aching a little inside, since I hadn't thought to call that old friend in 20 years.

But time flies.

Everybody seems calmed down now, as if they can read my mind, but I know I'm not a hard one to figure.

When we get where we are going, I open the door and hug my daughter.

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Not to worry, little one, we have all the time in the world.

Wayne Allensworth recently moved back to his native Texas and hates to be in a hurry, ever.

Letter From Southern Asia

by Raju G.C. Thomas

Afghanistan, Kashmir, and South Asian Security

A poem written by Sir Alfred Lyall in the mid-19th century and quoted by King Abdur Rahman Khan in his 1900 biography, *The Life of Abdur Rahman Khan, Amir of Afghanistan*, reads:

> The Afghan is but grist in the mill,
> And the waters are moving it fast,
> Let the stone be upper or nether,
> It grinds him to powder at last.
> And the lord of the English writes:
> Order and justice, and govern with laws;
> And the Russian he sneers and says:
> Patience and velvet to cover your claws;
> But the kingdoms of Islam are crumbling,
> And round me a voice ever rings
> Of death, and the doom of my country.
> Shall I be the last of its kings?

If the word "American" is substituted for the word "English" in the fifth line, this poem would be relevant still, especially following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on December 24, 1979. The 19th-century "great game," however, has taken on a new twist since September 11, 2001. The struggle over Afghanistan now has regional and global ramifications—the prospect of an Indo-Pakistani nuclear war and further acts of terrorism by Muslim extremists, bringing the war into the heartland of the United States and the West.

On October 12, 2001 Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told reporters again that Kashmir "is the most dangerous place in the world" and that "the main purpose of [Secretary of State Colin] Powell's trip would be to ensure that tensions between the two countries do not escalate."

With the elimination of the Taliban regime and the Al Qaeda ("base") of its "special guest," Osama bin Laden, the Bush administration plans to establish stability in the region. This includes setting up a multiethnic interim Afghan regime under the symbolic leadership of the octogenarian king, Zahir Shah, and the resolution of the Kashmir issue so as to diffuse the prospect of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan.

In the long term, it is unlikely that the Northern Alliance (made up of minority Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras) and the various tribal and religious factions of the majority Pashtuns will cooperate under American occupation. Large-scale U.S. aid may only increase the struggle among the parties for the spoils. A new danger may arise if disgruntled Pashtuns revive the pre-1980 "Pashtunistan" movement that sought to unite Pashtuns on either side of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The problem with Kashmir is that there is no room for compromise on either side. Pakistan will not give up her claim to the valley. India may relinquish her claim to Azad Kashmir, but she will not give up the valley or any other part that she holds. Any concession here, the Indian government believes, would be the first step toward the unraveling of India, as it was in the former Yugoslavia. There will be no change in these positions, no matter which government is in power in Islamabad or New Delhi.

From the Indian standpoint, to accept American mediation would be to acknowledge that there is something to mediate, and that would be the prized Valley of Kashmir. To India, mediation would be the first step toward losing the Valley and, perhaps, more. India is a country of seven major religions and about 35 (18 official) major languages. If India loses Kashmir, the entire turbulent northeast sector of India could go the same way, and then possibly Sikh-majority Punjab and parts of the prosperous Dravidian south, although much of the rest of India is now deeply integrated, thanks mainly to the Bollywood film industry and the economic integration of the country.

The basis for the settlement of the Sino-Indian border dispute was the territorial *status quo* with marginal adjustments, whatever the legitimacy of the Indian claim to Aksai Chin in the northwest and the Chinese claim to Arunachal Pradesh in the northeast. Both India and China have accepted these realities and have incorporated them in the 1994 Border Peace and Tranquility Agreement. Today, the Sino-Indian Himalayan border dispute is resolved *de facto*.

A solution to Kashmir must be drawn along similar lines. Beyond the risk of India unraveling like Yugoslavia in a bloodbath (when Slovenia and Croatia were hastily and recklessly recognized) or the probability of Indonesia unraveling after East Timor was dislodged through diplomatic intervention, the future of 144 million Muslims in India depends on maintaining the territorial *status quo* in Kashmir. If four million Kashmiri Muslims cannot live in Hindu-majority India, by logical extension, neither can 144 million Muslims in the rest of India. The leaders of the Indian Muslims in the Hindu-majority areas of British India were mainly responsible for the creation of Pakistan, not the Muslims of the Muslim-majority areas that became West and East Pakistan.

The four million Kashmiri Valley Muslims, out of a total Indian population of one billion, could easily have been swamped through Punjabi Hindu and Sikh settlements. The Indian government has continued to prevent this for more than 50 years through a special constitutional provision. Indeed, in Azad Kashmir, the Kashmiri identity does not exist because of Punjabi Muslim settlements and intermarriages with local Kashmiris.

The answer to South Asia's problems is the same as that being enforced in Israel, a state that was not recognized by the vast majority of the states of the world until after the 1991 Gulf War. The Palestinians led by Yasser Arafat have learned to recognize that reality. Similarly, Kashmir is a part of India, Tibet is a part of China, and the Pashtun province of the Northwest Frontier Province is a part of Pakistan. Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and China must face these realities and agree to maintain the territorial *status quo* and internal sovereignty of one another's states, whatever the legitimacy of one another's territorial claims. Only marginal adjustments may be allowed.

Raju G.C. Thomas is a professor of political science at Marquette University.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

In Memoriam: Gen. Alexander Lebed, 1950-2002

When I first met General Alexander Lebed, shortly after he was forced to retire from his military career in 1995, he was a crusty soldier with great political ambitions, itching for action but visibly uncomfortable in mufti. His tie knot was too wide and his parade-ground bass sounded coarse and unmodulated. His face, with more than a hint of the Asian steppe, bore the marks of many brawls. His views on Russia's predicament, mostly grim but stated with simplicity and conviction, were refreshingly clear in a city brimming with "experts" who sought to rationalize their country's economic and political collapse. Lebed did not oppose capitalism—"real competition is good, healthy"—but he hated its Mafioso-monopolistic variety rampant in President Boris Yeltsin's Russia and resented the resulting reduction of his countrymen to the status of "beggars." He accepted the Soviet Union's disintegration but wanted clear guarantees of the rights of millions of Russians stranded in the successor states; he rose to national prominence because of his support, in 1992, of the Russians' demand for self-rule in Moldova's Trans-Dniester region.

The news of Lebed's death in a helicopter crash on April 28 did not merit front-page treatment in the West, but, at the time of our first encounter, he was regarded as a man of destiny. Assuming that I was yet another foreign visitor in need of quick assurance about his intentions, he claimed to accept "democracy" as the basic framework for Russia's future political discourse. To his credit, he did so without nurturing any illusions about democracy's magical properties; personally, he favored what he called "the dictatorship of the rule of law." Looking back at his notable record as a paratroop commander in the "chaos" of the Afghan war, he said he saw "pain and remembrance, but never shame"—shame belonged strictly to politicians, the breed for which Lebed had a healthy disdain. To him, Yeltsin's "democrats" (with whom he sided in the confusion of the 1991 coup attempt) were as self-serving and hypocritical as their Communist predecessors, and he condemned them by quoting Plato on the dangers of "liberty" when demagogues and oligarchs manipulate it. "I couldn't care less for democracy," he famously remarked about his role in the events of August 1991, "but I wasn't ready to kill my fellow Russians."

Lebed was born in the southern Cossack city of Novocherkassk in 1950, and his boyhood taught him some of the harsher lessons of Russian politics. In 1962, he watched Soviet troops gun down hundreds of workers in his hometown, bringing a quick end to one of the few labor strikes in Soviet history. Lebed's father was a former political prisoner, condemned by Stalin to the Gulag but later reprieved to serve in a military punishment battalion during World War II. Lebed nevertheless chose a military career. After graduating from the paratrooper academy in 1970, he rose swiftly through the ranks. He was decorated for his service as a battalion commander in Afghanistan in the early 1980's and, in 1990, became one of the Soviet Army's youngest generals.

Five years later, Russia seemed ripe for someone like Lebed: patriotic, unlike Yeltsin's "pro-Western" coterie embodied in his foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, and the hated ex-premier Yegor Gaidar; honest, unlike the mega-rich oligarchs in and around the "family," embodied in prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin; reliable, unlike the erratic and embarrassing Vladimir Zhirinovsky; and free from the old *apparatchik* taint, unlike the Communist opposition leader Gennadi Zyuganov. As the election year of 1996 drew near, Lebed was more popular than any one of them, and the outside world started taking notice. In January 1996, I brought a half-dozen Western friends (including Tom Fleming) to meet the man then increasingly regarded as Russia's likely next president. We encountered a self-confident and friendlier Lebed. His voice sounded smoother, and he wisely made pauses before answering questions. His suite of offices on the Arbat had the appearance of a viable political operation. He spent over an hour speaking mainly on foreign affairs, and his salient theme was the need for Russia's recovery—not only for Russia's own sake but because the "void" in place of Moscow's traditional geopolitical role was bad for the rest of the world, America included. He dwelt on the necessity for Russia to develop a "national idea" that would reassert its national identity on Soviet ruins.

In the crucial months that followed, Lebed proved out of his depth in the complexities of national politics. He came third in the first round of the presidential contest, winning over 11 million votes (about 15 percent of the ballots cast). Some projections showed him winning in the second round, which scared Yeltsin into cutting a deal in which Lebed dropped out of the race in return for a high Kremlin post and anointment as the president's chosen successor.

To the boundless chagrin of many of his followers, Lebed supported Yeltsin in the second round, helping him clinch a victory against Zyuganov. This was a fateful error: He was appointed Yeltsin's national security advisor, but the damage to his credibility proved irreparable. In his new capacity, Lebed successfully negotiated the ceasefire in Chechnya, but he also created powerful enemies by his unconcealed disgust for the sleaze and graft rampant in the Kremlin. His costly acceptance of a high position could have been followed by a patient exercise in empire-building, and it is possible that his role of heir-apparent might have been accepted by the oligarchs had he not made them feel threatened. Lebed chose to make himself feared by the corrupt presidential entourage instead, ending up with the worst of all worlds. After only four months, in October 1996, he

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Gen. Alexander Lebed poses with Srdja Trifkovic

was fired, and there was no power base to go back to.

Lebed seemed able to rebuild it when he ran for, and won, the governorship of the huge Siberian province of Krasnoyarsk in 1998, but his victory in retrospect looks like an admission that his higher ambitions had evaporated. He took no part in the subsequent political maneuvers that brought Vladimir Putin into the Kremlin as prime minister in 1999, leading to Putin's enthronement as president in March 2000. He had become a has-been, without ever having "been," while almost a decade of Yeltsinism reduced Russia to a neocolonial wreck with collapsing birthrates, a moribund industry, and an unconsolidated body politic. We will never know if Lebed might have prevented Russia's descent to its present status of a crisis-laden society and a disoriented state, because, having alienated the narrow stratum of robber barons during the early stages of his would-be rise, he never got the chance to try.

On one occasion in the past half-decade, Lebed attracted considerable attention in Washington, when he warned the United States that at least 80 suitcase-sized nuclear devices from the old Soviet Union's weapons arsenal had gone missing. On CBS's *60 Minutes* (September 7, 1997), he first revealed that Russia had built small, portable nuclear bombs called "Special Atomic Demolition Munitions" that were truly "first strike" weapons that could be used at the outbreak of nuclear war by saboteurs. During his short time in power, he ordered the Russian military to make an accounting of these weapons and was shocked by the result. As he told a delegation of visiting congressmen, including Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA), he could only locate 48 of 132 such devices. This meant that there were over 80 small atomic demolition devices, with capacities of one to ten kilotons, that the Russians simply could not locate.

On another occasion, Lebed's wise words elicited no response from Washington. In an interview with the Hamburg weekly *Der Spiegel* on April 5, 1999, at the height of the NATO bombing of Serbia, he rejected the interviewer's suggestion that he wanted Russia to wage war on Serbia's behalf: "On the contrary. I want to resist the large-scale war in a civilized manner, because, otherwise, it will spread over the entire world-above all, through terrorism and, above all, against the Americans." Lebed may not have been clever, but he was wise. ©

To Russia, With Love?

Russia may hold one of the keys to the American future. To discuss and debate the issues arising from the emerging power-triangle of the United States, Russia, and Europe (which all face the threat of militant Islam), The Rockford Institute is joining forces with the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow for a conference exploring the possibilities of a real Northern Alliance.

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TERRORISM

The Next Intelligence Crisis

by Philip Jenkins

In the months since the attacks of September 11, 2001, we have heard a great deal about the need to repair the intelligence walls that should have been defending America. There is no question that the United States needs a much stronger and more proactive intelligence apparatus, both foreign and domestic, and I, for one, am not too troubled by the prospect of American agents bugging, burgling, and even killing our enemies, should those acts be necessary to save the lives of our own people. It has been fascinating over recent months to read media accounts of liberal and leftist young people, inflamed by the new patriotism, announce that they are seriously considering careers in intelligence.

Yet even as we pour new resources into the CIA, FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security and enhance their powers, it would be a good idea to pay a little attention to history and to recall just how we got ourselves into this fix in the first place. Briefly, in the 1940's and 50's, federal agencies acquired vast powers, at a time when it seemed unpatriotic to inquire exactly how they were using them. When it was revealed that these agencies were engaging in many questionable activities—some of them criminal—public opinion turned decisively against them, resulting in the crippling of U.S. intelligence in the 80's and 90's. As we enter a new phase of seemingly uncritical support for intelligence, we should be thinking hard about how to avoid the next phase in the cycle. Otherwise, in another five or ten years, we will once again face a series of exposés and public hearings that will ruin our intelligence forces and, who knows, perhaps even bring down a future U.S. administration.

We do not have to believe in inevitable historical cycles to accept this warning: We need only observe the well-established fact that, in certain circumstances, bureaucratic agencies tend to behave in similar ways. If the political environment of the coming decade is going to look increasingly like that of the 50's and 60's, then it is not unreasonable to assume that agencies will respond in much the same ways as they did in years past. We really have been here before.

Based on the horrors of earlier years, I would suggest a number of ground rules that should be drummed into the senior officials of the intelligence agencies, then incorporated into the training of all personnel. Better they should learn them now than through bitter experience. I also want to suggest how readily this kind of information can be found, in widely available books: We are not dealing here with arcane state secrets.

First, we must accept the profound moral ambiguities of the intelligence world or, to put it more coarsely, acknowledge that when you lie down with dogs, you will wake up with fleas. As a group or individual enters more deeply into the fight against terrorism, this means associating with very bad people, who are involved in seriously criminal conduct, including murder, violence and drug-dealing. Drugs are likely to remain central in such underground activity, because the drug trade is and always has been so intimately connected with other forms of illegal international commerce that lead into terrorist networks, notably the traffic in weapons and gold. Underworlds intersect. If you want to track Islamist networks in Europe today, you have to follow the heroin, and you can scarcely do that unless, at some stage, you actively deal in that drug, or else protect somebody else trafficking in it. And anyone wanting to influence affairs in Pakistan and Afghanistan had better have firsthand acquaintance with the world of opium.

Intelligence agents must always be aware of who is using whom. At some stage, you will probably have to assist X in escaping the legal consequences of some crime—a regrettable necessity. But things become very dangerous when you find that you are giving an informant a free pass on criminal activity, and even profiting from it. To see how plans go terribly wrong when dealing with informants, read *Black Mass*, the horrifying book by Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill (Harper Perennial) on how the FBI became, over three decades, the chief protectors and patrons of Boston's lethal Irish crime syndicate. And to see how tolerating crime can slide into full participation in those activities, read Alfred W. McCoy's wonderful book on CIA drug-dealing during the Vietnam era, *The Politics of Heroin in South-East Asia* (Lawrence Hill & Co.). Nor are these misdeeds the sole preserve of U.S. intelligence agencies. Chris Moore's *The Kincora Scandal* (Dufour Editions) tells the horrific story of how an attempt to blackmail Ulster paramilitaries in the 1970's led British intelligence to turn a blind eye to the sexual abuse of hundreds of young boys.

Dealing with bad people often means doing things that seem very shady—for instance, giving weapons to people you believe to be terrorists. Usually, this is done with some higher purpose in mind, such as gaining entrée to a terrorist operation in order to prevent a worse crime. At such times, only a fool would complain about violations of strict legality: Some laws have to be broken. However, anyone involved in intelligence needs to be alert to the dangers involved in moonlighting or subcontracting. The prospective agent must always bear in the back of his mind the story of Edwin Wilson, Frank Terpil, and the "syndicate within a syndicate" that operated in the CIA in the 1970's.

The exact story remains controversial, but briefly, Wilson was a senior CIA agent who began subcontracting for various states and terrorist organizations. Among other things, the Wilson syndicate succeeded in diverting large quantities of U.S. arms to Libya, training Middle Eastern terrorists, and undertaking the assassination of Libya's enemies overseas. U.S. intelligence agents who came into contact with Wilson knew that he was no longer officially with the CIA, but that fact meant nothing, since nobody ever really leaves the CIA, or the FBI, or any of their counterparts. They assumed that he was still working for the CIA, but his operations were so flagrantly dangerous that they repeatedly checked with Agency higher-ups in Washington, only to be assured that his actions were known and approved. This raises the possibility that a substantial number of highly placed CIA officers were involved in Wil-

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son's moonlighting. The "Halloween Massacre," the purge of these dubious characters in 1977, threw the agency's overseas operations into chaos, especially in the Middle East—though it is difficult to see how else the Agency's political masters could have reacted to such widespread criminality. The Wilson disaster has been chronicled in Peter Maas's *Manhunt* (Harrap Publishing Group), and Joseph C. Goulden's *The Death Merchant* (Simon & Schuster).

Intelligence agencies demand extraordinary powers on the grounds that the nation is facing extraordinary dangers, and that claim is often justified. As time goes by, though, that justification is stretched to permit activities not obviously connected with the original threat. This danger became evident in the Nixon years as the administration increasingly tried to use intelligence agencies against its internal political foes. At first, this policy had some possible justification—perhaps foreign powers really could have been aiding internal dissidents such as the Black Panthers and Weathermen—but as time passed, the CIA, the FBI, and other agencies made it clear that such foreign dabbling was of marginal significance. That left the White House to form its own "plumbing" force to control leaks and harass enemies, and the obvious source for such technicians was the intelligence or "ex-intelligence" community. Sooner or later, though, those operations would be discovered and would track back both to the White House and to the agencies themselves. Once the intelligence agencies were associated irrevocably with one party and one administration, their very existence was imperiled, and the stage was set for the exposés of the mid-1970's—the Church and Rockefeller committees. Any future intelligence chief needs to know the story of Watergate in great detail and to have on his wall a large plaque that reads "Never again!"

Just as essential as rules against moonlighting and plumbing is the injunction never to wander "off the shelf," to operate outside official direction. Hard though it may be to believe, Congress really does have some say over the funding of intelligence and international politics, and it is a dangerous idea to try to get around these controls by private fundraising. The problem is that the resources for carrying out a private foreign policy abound, in the form of funds from friendly governments or magnates or the profits of illicit enterprise. When a faction of an intelligence agency decides to go off on its own, as Wilson did, it has the potential to provide a complete off-the-shelf quasi-governmental agency, operating entirely in the shadows, free from government restraint. We saw such a quasi-government in operation in Central America in the 1980's, when the Reagan administration fought its clandestine war against communism through a bunch of really questionable CIA types, mercenaries, and "consultants." As a semiprivate operation, they could act without the stern restrictions that Congress had placed on funding anticommunist activism. So what could go wrong?

The answer, of course, is that, at some point, such demi-/semi-/quasi-approved operations are linked to the White House, and when they come to public attention, the presidency stands the risk of a massive scandal. Semiprivate swashbuckling sounds wonderful, but at some point, it will almost certainly come to ruin, and the consequence will be a public outcry for more effective restrictions on U.S. intelligence operations. To see how this process works in practice, read *Blond Ghost* (Simon & Schuster), David Corn's biography of legendary agent Ted Shackley, who was at the center of every CIA horror story for half a century, or Lawrence Walsh's account of the Iran-Contra affair in *Firewall* (W.W. Norton & Co.).

When things start to go wrong, when the first leaks and exposés start appearing, it is tempting to believe that you will be saved by the public concern for secrecy, that people will be sufficiently terrified by invoking the national enemy of the day, whether communism or terrorism. Unfortunately for any misbehaving agent, such fears do not retain their force indefinitely, and the media are all too likely to turn on you. Also, barring a fundamental change in human nature within the next few years, it is safe to assume that rival intelligence agencies will be the first to help in your exposure and ruin, partly as a weapon in bureaucratic infighting, partly out of personal malice. In short, secrecy will not save you.

Once the scandal does start—and it will—the only question is how high it will go, and the precedent of modern history suggests that intelligence scandals tend to go very high indeed. One President in the 1970's was destroyed by such a crisis, and another in the 1980's came close to sharing his fate. Losing presidents is bad enough, but worse still is the impact of such a scandal on the nation's defenses. Scandals produce hypercriticism, which cripples agencies and exposes the country to international attack. Let's not permit this cycle to begin again.

Philip Jenkins is the author, most recently, of The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity *(Oxford University Press).*

CULTURE WARS

Revamped by the Psychic Vampires

by Marian Kester Coombs

When you've done something pretty bad, or nothing particularly good, the best defense is a good offense. Attack mode works better than the smoothest excuses—God forbid you should ever apologize!—to obscure your faults and silence criticism before it is even uttered. Thus we find that the loudest complainers in our midst are those who caused most of the problems in the first place and contribute the least to their solution.

For instance: Between 300 and 400 years ago, your ancestors were brought to the Americas as slaves. There, your numbers increased exponentially until you outnumbered the master class in many regions.

About 200 years ago, the British applied diplomatic pressure, raided ports, boarded ships on the high seas, engaged in skirmishes, and finally put an end to the slave trade worldwide.

Then, 150 years ago, you were emancipated in the United States by means of a gruesome war that killed nearly 700,000 American men, mostly young and almost all white. The Battle of Gettysburg alone slaughtered 51,112 in a mere three days.

Your emancipation preceded the emancipation of Russia's (white) serfs by several years.

Today, there is not a single country in your ancestral homeland where you would enjoy the rights, the opportunities, the education, the prosperity, the freedom, the fame, and the sheer fabulous fun that are yours in the modern United States of America. In addition to enjoying the rights of all Americans, years of

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special entitlement programs costing your fellow citizens billions of dollars have enshrined you as a protected class.

Meanwhile, your rank-and-file commits violent crime at rates up to 30 times higher than your proportion of the populace, yet you wonder why people cross the street when they see you coming or want to check out why you're driving slowly through their neighborhood. Yell "racism!" and you can literally get away with murder.

Despite watered-down curricula, grade inflation, multiculturalism, innumerable special programs, lawsuits, and (more) yelling, your children "underperform" in school. After decades of affirmative action, the numbers still aren't on your side.

So what do you do?

You shrilly remind everyone on a daily basis that you were once slaves, so that explains and excuses all. You claim you developed all the sciences first, long ago, then had them stolen out from under your nose, so that's why you can't master them anymore.

You let your leaders mouth the vilest slanders against this country, its white citizens, its history, its founders, its institutions, its beliefs, and its good faith. No charge is too outrageous or nonsensical for your esteemed statesmen: Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, Louis Farrakhan.

George Washington: an irrelevant slaveholder in a goofy powdered wig. Thomas Jefferson: a "pedophile and rapist." George W. Bush: an illegitimately installed Führer dedicated heart and soul to keeping you down so the evil majority can continue living off the blood, toil, tears, and sweat of your people.

(My personal favorite is Spike Lee's comment that Mozart was "some little creep." Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—some little creep. Compared to whom? To the stunted, untalented Mr. Lee?)

Another instance: The unhygienic behavior of your subculture creates a huge reservoir of infectious disease, which begins to spill over into the general population—TB, hepatitis B and C, STDs galore. Finally you pick up something really exotic and unusual, incubate it a while, then introduce it to society. The ensuing epidemic rages, costing billions, killing millions (including newborn babies), and nearly wrecking the entire health-insurance industry.

So what do you do?

You "act up." You scream nonstop that not enough is being done or spent, the government is trying to wipe you out, mainstream society wants you all to die off horribly, "Silence kills!" You promote the theory that this plague was actually hatched by evil straight white scientists (forgive the redundancy) to eliminate your precious presence from Earth.

The Catholic Church dares to condemn the lifestyle of your subculture, calling it "self-destructive." But you know how to deal with *them*: You use the scandals caused by your own actions—say, when you infiltrate the priesthood and molest altar boys—as weapons against the Church itself. See: All priests are pedophiles! The brilliance of audacity. It works so well that you are also using the tactic against the hated Boy Scouts of America.

These two cases by no means exhaust the list. What about wymyn, led by Our Lady of Perpetual Outrage, Sir Edmund's social-climbing namesake Hillary? This oppressed "gender" has the longest lifespan of any class of human ever on the planet. Its members handily outnumber the "other gender" (OG). They can't be drafted, but they can vote. They take the cushy jobs, not the bone-crushing ones. They fill the law schools, grad schools, colleges, and universities.

Ah, but they are not happy. They do not Have It All. So they deride technological marvels as "boys' toys." They dismiss the human race's long struggle for freedom as "testosterone poisoning." They bitch endlessly that the OG fails to do its fair share of childcare and housework.

We could go on and on, but readers will already be able to identify other glaring cases of preemptive aggression toward our society. The pattern is always the same. First, keep up the fire implacably, louder and hotter, lest the target have a moment's blessed peace in which to analyze the cogency and merits of your abuse. Second, wherever possible, have it both ways. For example, claim there is absolutely nothing "gay" about the AIDS epidemic—but, at the same time, claim that, because it is predominantly a homosexual affliction, "nobody cares" about it. Or claim that PMS is nothing but a misogynist myth—but, at the same time, claim that, because the syndrome only afflicts wymyn, "nobody cares" about it.

Strange but true: Parasites don't just feed physically upon the material substance of others but batten metaphysically upon the order and the joy of others' lives. Impossible as it may be for self-sufficient people to comprehend, there really are those who thrive on sowing misery, confusion, and self-loathing in others. Such people are the psychic-vampire cousins of those so attracted to the greatness of the celebrated that they just have to stab them to death.

Sometimes even the right, whose job is supposed to be to cheer us on, seems to have given up and joined the spiteful chorus, substituting its own critique: *We're* the weak, sick, soft, depraved slaves of Leviathan, not worth a pitcher of warm Kool-Aid.

All of these aggrieved parties have one thing in common: They are on the outside looking in, ranting against the "complacency" and "insensitivity" of those inside. Call it the Castro Syndrome: an unrequited lust for recognition and acceptance that curdles into relentless enmity.

These are the true homeless. As Colin Wilson wrote so perceptively, outsiders "are never alive in what they do." And they demand a living piece of those who are.

But in the end, the venom palls, and life goes on, and we have already wasted too much of our brief stint on this wondrous planet to spend any more time listening politely to the "constructive criticism" of these most dubious of advisors. Life is for the living. And life is very good.

Marian Kester Coombs writes from Crofton, Maryland.

The Ghost of Islam in the Balkans

by Tomislav Sunic

In the historical memory of Central and Eastern European peoples, the words "Muslim" and "Islam" often evoke images of terror and violence. Derided by leftist and liberal intellectuals as "xenophobic," these negative images are still associated with the Turks and their centuries-long military incursions into the heart of Europe. Even the verbal derivatives of the word "Turk" in Slavic and Germanic languages often carry pejorative meanings. In Austrian Carinthia, Turks are remembered as *Renner und Brenner* ("runners and fire-setters"), who, while burning their way into the Alps, left terror and destruction in their wake. Far worse was the case of the Northern Ital-

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ian region of Furlany, whose ransacking was depicted by the late Italian filmmaker and writer Pietro Paolo Pasolini. Shortly before the Croatian catastrophe on the field of Krbava in 1477, from the top of St. Mark's in Venice, observers could witness the flames and smoke billowing all the way to the town of Udine. In their incendiary incursions, the Turks used the Balkan Wallachs, Albanians, and scores of marauding gypsies as frontline ethnic cleansers.

Even the recent war in the Balkans and the killings of Bosnian Muslims cannot be understood unless we take into account the centuries of Turkish terror in the Balkans. The onslaught of Islam resulted in massive transfers of populations. It was pure historical coincidence that Hungary and Croatia did not become part of the Ottoman Empire. Thanks to foreign volunteers from all parts of the Holy Roman Empire, including large numbers of Krajina Serbs and Danubian Germans, these regions still preserve their Central European and Catholic heritage. Still, it is a great shame that the role of Prince Eugene of Savoy, the liberator of Central Europe, is widely ignored in politically correct school syllabi and by the European media. After the expulsion of the Turks from the Panonian fields and the Danubian basin, the Holy Roman Empire decided to repopulate these devastated but fertile European regions with hundreds of thousands of German settlers who, until 1945, were known in Hungary and monarchic Yugoslavia as *Donauschwaben*. During World War II, many Danubian Germans volunteered for the Prinz Eugene Division of the Waffen SS, named after their patron hero. On May 18, 1945, 1,600 disarmed German legionnaires were swiftly executed by Tito's victorious Communist partisans; the rest were shipped to the zinc mines in Bor.

In monarchic and conservative circles in modern Europe, Prince Eugene remains a Christian hero. Born in France, Eugene strayed very early into the intrigues of Louis XIV's corrupt court. The French king mocked Eugene's flat nose, shrunken body, and huge head (and homosexual inclinations), and suggested to his royal coterie that Eugene was cut out less for a military career than for the life of a village priest. Out of hatred for Louis XIV, Eugene, who originally came from Italian-speaking Savoy, left France and offered his services to her mortal enemy: The Holy Roman Empire. In 1683, he participated in the defense of Vienna against the Turkish siege, and in the following decades, he liberated the entire Danubian region—including Belgrade, in 1717. Thus, the armed empire halted the anti-Christian invasion and the Turkish destruction of European civilization. Unfortunately, Eugene failed to liberate Sarajevo and to chase the Turks out of Europe for good. Battle along the Rhine forced him to pull back his troops to defend the empire against the French. The Islamic Sublime Porte maintained close ties with Catholic France, whose age-old obsession was to disrupt German-controlled access to the Black Sea via the Danube. He who controls the Danube, it is often said, controls Europe.

Despite their Asian origin, Turks absorbed many ethnic Europeans, particularly through the importation of white slaves from Turkish-occupied Central European regions to the Anatolian Peninsula. The Ottoman regime provided excellent career opportunities to young Islamicized Europeans—a development encouraged by the Turks in the Balkans and exemplified by the Bosnian Muslims. Suspicion lingers today among Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia toward the Slavic Muslim government in Sarajevo. It is entirely possible that some type of reconciliation will take place between the Serbs and Croats despite a century of mutual enmity. Such a development seems much less likely between either of these groups and the Slavic Muslims.

The founding father of modern secular Turkey, Kemal Pasha Ataturk, resembled a German patriarch more than an Asian despot. His place of birth in the Balkans suggests that he was either of Slavic or Albanian descent. No insult can be worse to a Turk than to call him an "Arab." By contrast, Turkey has close ties to modern Israel. After Isabella II expelled the Jews from Spain in the 15th century, many Sephardic Jews took refuge in the vast Ottoman Empire, which encompassed not only the Balkans but a solid chunk of Arabic North Africa. The state of Israel closely cooperates with Turkey's military intelligence. Turkey's appalling human-rights record is usually overlooked, and the European Union, pressured by the United States, must go to great lengths to accommodate the never-ending Turkish bid to enter the union.

For the United States, both Israel and Turkey are important allies in the NATO-controlled eastern Mediterranean. Turkey is vital for access to the Central Asian basin, and she serves, with her powerful half-a-million man army, as the chief arbiter of "hydropolitics," controlling the main water routes to the Middle East.

During the war in the Balkans, with the full blessing of the United States, Turkey provided covert support to Bosnian Muslims and Albanians. Turkey's memories of her lost European "*glacis*" are vivid, and she still longs to restore the past glory that once stretched to the doors of Vienna. Despite the prominent role of the Turkish military apparatus and the high prestige of the Turkish military in public life, Turkey has been plagued for decades by the separatist Kurds, who make up approximately 15 million of Turkey's population and whose goal is secession. Turkey is often annoyed by Armenian and Greek lobbies in France and America who openly demand a public apology for the Turkish genocide of 1.5 million Armenians in 1915. Without exception, Turkey's political and intellectual class rejects any allegation of genocide. While Germany must publicly demonstrate atonement for her sins in World War II, Turkey seems to be light years away from apologies for her genocidal practices against Slavs and Armenians.

Over eight million Muslims live in the Balkans today, an autochtonous population that once converted to Islam, either out of opportunism or sheer terror. Well over ten million Muslims reside in the states of the European Union, mostly immigrants from North Africa and Turkey. Germany alone boasts three million Muslims, mostly immigrant Turks and Kurds. In the United Kingdom, there are over 2.5 million Muslims, mostly immigrants from Pakistan and Arabic countries, and France has a staggering four million Muslims, mostly immigrants from North and Central Africa.

Modern liberalism preaches racial tolerance and multicultural conviviality. Yet after the terrorist strikes against the United States, and in the wake of the U.S. bombardment of Afghanistan, the multicultural utopia is beginning to show its dark side. It is a great irony of history that national socialists and fascists had many supporters and avid military volunteers in the Balkans and in the Middle East during World War II. In hindsight, Croatian fascist and Catholic leader Ante Pavelic appears the true advocate of liberal multiculturalism. In the center of Catholic Zagreb, he built a large mosque—

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whose minarets were pulled down and destroyed by the victorious Yugoslav Communists in 1945.

Tomislav Sunic, a writer and former Croat diplomat, resides in Europe.

Racial Conflicts

by Chris Segura

Three days before the world "changed forever," U.N. Human Rights Commissioner Mary Robinson tried to put a pretty face on a lackluster summit that had just ended in Durban, South Africa. The nine-day conference, designed to address "racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance," was doomed when the United States and Israel withdrew over objections to two items on the agenda. One item under consideration was reparations for slavery, an institution that officially ended in the United States more than a century ago yet continues in many countries today. The second was a push by a bloc of Arab nations to declare Israeli militancy in Palestine racist. That proposal was absurd by all scientific standards and would only have escalated violence by perpetuating an ancient myth of human hatred.

In her closing remarks, Robinson admitted that "The issues have been addressed, not answered. But we have a framework. We have made a start and that is what counts." Then, while mentioning moving testimony from people "on the receiving end of racism and discrimination," she claimed racism is the motivation for slavery. By strict definition, however, slavery is an economic institution; it is not necessarily racist.

Certainly, when slavery was legal in parts of the United States, the vast majority of slaveowners were white, while all of the slaves were black; still, there were instances—particularly in Louisiana—of free blacks owning black slaves. In parts of the world where slavery exists today, there is generally no racial differentiation between slaves and slaveholders.

Robinson credited the conference with putting "the gender dimension of racism on the map." One might also conclude, then, that "male chauvinism" is, in some way, racist.

Racism may be as ancient as mankind itself, but the science of racism dates from the mid-18th century. In the beginning, the effort to define the races included separating them into a hierarchy. In 1758, Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus named our species the Latin equivalent of "wise (or thinking) primate," *Homo sapiens*. He showed little wisdom, though, by ascribing derogatory characteristics to each of the four races except his own. Native Americans were "ill-tempered, obstinate, contented . . . free," he wrote, while Asians were "severe, haughty, desirous"; black Africans were "crafty, slow (and) foolish," but whites were "active, very smart (and) inventive."

The study of race has come a long way, especially because of recent breakthroughs in the science of DNA and the human genome. With the exception, perhaps, of the Basques, whose obscure biological origins lend racial authenticity to their brand of separatist terrorism, there are still only four races, and both sides in the Palestinian conflict belong to one: Caucasian or white. Ongoing studies increasingly demonstrate that all the races have far more similarities than differences.

One observer has noted that the state of Israel was founded by Western European Jews displaced by the genocidal practices of World War II, who are now pitted against native Middle Easterners, even though both Islam and Judaism (and Christianity, for that matter) originated in the same area.

As Steve Olson noted in the April 2001 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*, however, geneticists have proved that:

> Europeans are descended largely from populations of farmers who started migrating out of the Middle East 9,000 years ago. As the sons and daughters of farming families left their parents' farms and moved into new territory, they interbred with the existing hunter-gatherer populations, which produced gradients of genetic change radiating from the Middle East. Only in mountainous areas unattractive to farmers—the Pyrenees homelands of the Basques, for example—were the genes of the indigenous peoples comparatively intact.

Olson laments that it appears to be human nature to concentrate on the differences rather than the similarities between the races. It is far more dangerous, though, to ascribe racial qualifications to cultural, religious, or ethnic differences.

For example, the term "sand nigger" became more widely used in the American vernacular after September 11, 2001. Attacks on Muslims were reported in many areas of the United States even though, of the approximately 1.1 billion adherents to Islam worldwide, only about 15 percent are of Arabic descent.

"Raghead" also became suddenly popular, and Sikhs were reportedly attacked, even though they are not Muslim. Sikhism is a 15th-century offshoot of Hinduism. It has nothing to do with Islam. The only similarity between the two religions is that male adherents to both wear turbans, though of different styles. However, attacking people because they look, dress, or pray differently is xenophobic, not racist.

Some believe that warfare between identifiably different groups of human beings is endemic to the human species. The oldest archeological evidence suggests, however, that modern human beings did not wage war against other hominid species, even when they coexisted in the same areas for several millennia. As Olson wrote,

> The cave paintings of Europe, some of which date from the period when modern people were replacing Neanderthals, evince plenty of violence against animals but not against other people.

The U.S. delegation's withdrawal from the Durban Conference no doubt had more to do with the tragic American experience with race—a drama that is still unfolding in our society—than with any scientific dogma. The American Association of Anthropologists addressed this in May 1998: "Racial beliefs constitute myths about the diversity in the human species and about the abilities and behavior of people homogenized into 'racial' categories." Furthermore, the association argued,

> The myths fused behavior and physical features together in the public mind, impeding our comprehension of both biological variations and cultural behavior, implying that both are genetically determined. Racial myths bear no relationship to the reality of human capabilities or behavior. . . .

At the end of the 20th century, we

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now understand that human cultural behavior is learned, conditioned into infants beginning at birth, and always subject to modification. No human is born with a built-in culture or language. Our temperaments, dispositions, and personalities, regardless of genetic propensities, are developed within sets of meanings and values that we call "culture."

Still, scientific treatises do not always demonstrate the extent or complexity of any human endeavor. One example of racial warfare that occurred at Sand Creek, Colorado, in the fall of 1864 should give anyone pause.

Four years before Gen. Philip Sheridan told a Comanche chief named Tosawi that "The only good Indian I ever saw was dead," the sentiment behind the famous misquotation of that line—"The only good Indian is a dead Indian"—was already firmly embedded in the minds of European adventurers in the American West.

John Chivington was a former Methodist minister and dedicated antislavery hero of the War Between the States. His moment of glory was leading Union forces to victory against the Confederates to protect access to Colorado goldfields. His moment of infamy, however, came after his 1862 triumph at the Battle of Glorieta Pass. It was motivated by an impediment to greed: Arapaho and Cheyenne guarding ancestral lands guaranteed to them by a treaty with the United States in 1851 were squarely in the path of Union prospectors itching for gold.

Another famous enemy of black slavery played a part in this drama of racial iniquity: Colorado Territorial Gov. John Evans, who was appointed by President Abraham Lincoln largely for supporting Lincoln's emancipation of the slaves.

In August 1864, a band of Arapaho warriors massacred settlers illegally squatting on their land, an action similar to Palestinian attacks on Jewish settlers on the West Bank and elsewhere in Palestine. Evans immediately raised a company of volunteers, recruited primarily from among frustrated prospectors, for the stated purpose of killing Indians. He put Chivington in charge. Within a month, Cheyenne and Arapaho leaders met with Maj. Edward Wynkoop, the ranking Union Army officer in the area, declaring their desire to end all hostilities. Both Evans and Chivington were unconvinced—or unwilling to be convinced—of the chiefs' sincerity.

Five weeks later, Chivington arranged to have the sympathetic Wynkoop replaced by Maj. Scott Anthony, a cousin of Susan B. Anthony. Chivington convinced Anthony to make the Indians good by making them dead. In one of the most tragic moments in U.S. history, two established antislavery heroes and a cousin of the founder of the women's rights movement joined forces in a race war.

Religious and cultural components exacerbated the explosive situation. One biographer speculated that Chivington viewed Indians more harshly than slaves because the vast majority of the latter had accepted Christianity and the English language.

The mix exploded on November 29 at an encampment of Cheyenne and Arapaho noncombatants. Most of the young men were away on a hunting trip, leaving about 150 unarmed people in the camp; two thirds of them were women and children. The elderly included two chiefs in their 70's who had visited the White House the year before at Lincoln's invitation and had their picture taken with the First Lady.

Though a white handkerchief and an American flag fluttered from the main teepee, some of Chivington's 700 militiamen dismounted and opened fire. The bloodlust was so intense that, in the cavalry charge that followed, several comrades were wounded by friendly fire.

Fewer than a dozen victims escaped. All of the corpses were scalped. A rope spliced with about a hundred scalps was displayed onstage in Denver a couple of weeks later. The audience cheered.

Most, if not all, of the bodies were mutilated. Symbolic of the genocidal nature of racial conflicts, the soldiers ripped out genitalia for souvenirs. Female organs were displayed on a stick. Soldiers decorated their hats with uteruses. Scrotums were made into tobacco pouches. The remains were left to rot or be consumed by scavenging animals.

Both the United Nations Charter, adopted in 1945, and the UNESCO "Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice," approved in 1978, condemn racism by individuals and states. The 1978 declaration, especially, equates the severity of racism with other forms of intolerance, including those based on ethnic or religious bias. Both documents adopt the single-species view of humanity.

Article 1 of the 1945 charter directs UNESCO

> to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion . . .

The proposal before the U.N. Human Rights Commission to declare Israeli militancy racially motivated was contradictory to all scientific evidence and, therefore, not in keeping with the U.N. mandate to promote "collaboration among nations through education and science."

Given the United States' long, bloody past full of racial conflict and the ongoing, vigorous civil-rights movement over the past half-century, the U.S. delegation was completely justified in withdrawing from the Durban conference.

Much of the world viewed the action as simply one more instance of American solidarity with Israeli Zionism: a political and religious movement, not a racist one. Then the atrocities of September 11 occurred, and on October 19, less than two weeks after the United States began dropping bombs on Afghanistan, the U.N. Human Rights Commission narrowly approved a resolution condemning Israel for three weeks of violence against Palestinians. The text approved was presented by the Arab bloc. The United States and the European Union opposed the resolution because it made no mention of Palestinian abuses.

The resolution amounted to different words, sung to the same tune.

Chris Segura, a journalist, novelist, and short-story writer, writes from his hometown of Abbeville, Louisiana.

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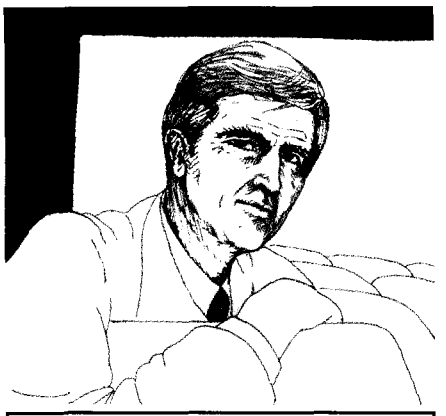

The Rookie

Produced by Walt Disney Pictures and 98 MPH Productions
Directed by John Lee Hancock
Screenplay by Mike Rich
Released by Buena Vista and Walt Disney Pictures

Clockstoppers

Produced by Nickelodeon Movies
Directed by Jonathan Frakes
Screenplay by Rob Hedden and Andy Hedden
Released by Paramount Pictures

I have no idea whether Oscar Wilde took an interest in America's national pastime, but I have little doubt that Disney's new baseball film, *The Rookie*, would have intrigued him. It palpably confirms his contention that life imitates art.

First-time director John Lee Hancock's film is based on the unlikely story of Jim Morris (Dennis Quaid) who began his baseball career as a mildly promising southpaw pitcher in the minor leagues until injuries forced him to quit at age 25. Then in 1998, he came back to pitch his first major-league game at 35. Sound familiar? That's because Bernard Malamud had already told Morris's story in his novel *The Natural*. Malamud's narrative concerns another gifted athlete named Roy Hobbes who finds his career brutally thwarted in youth and somehow manages to return to the game at 34, achieving a brief tenure on fame's scorecard. The difference between the two tales is that Hancock and his writer, Mike Rich, have hewed to the Disney tradition of pleasing the public. While Malamud makes us consider the troubling denouement of Hobbes' comeback, Hancock stops with Morris's triumphant debut at The Ballpark in Arlington, Texas, when he took the mound as a relief pitcher for the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. Not until the closing credits do we learn that his comeback came to an end two seasons later. Of course, we are told nothing of his shoulder tendonitis and the new operations performed on his elbow during his abbreviated professional tenure. The film wants to engage us in the spectacle of a man pursuing his lifelong dream. It doesn't want to question the nature or consequences of that dream. This said, *The Rookie* is a perfectly enjoyable and (oddly enough for a Disney production) genuinely affecting popular entertainment.

Morris grew up with a passion for baseball that went unappreciated by his father, played by Brian Cox, whose performance gives gruffness a bad name. The father's Navy career demanded frequent relocations that disrupted young Morris's chances to develop his talent under consistent coaching. When he complains, his father coldly tells him, "It's my job to decide when we move; it's your job to make the best of it." When his parents finally settle in Texas, it's in a town that lavishes funds on its high-school football squad at the expense of its baseball team. Morris nevertheless manages to get himself drafted by the Milwaukee Brewers. A few seasons into his minor-league career, however, pitching-arm injuries halt his progress. After several surgeries, including one that replaced his left shoulder tendon with one taken from his ankle, he calls it quits. He then returns to Big Lake, Texas, becomes a high-school physics teacher, and begins raising a family.

He also becomes his school's baseball coach. The film depicts his efforts to help his players overcome their lack of confidence. After one exasperating loss, he chides them for quitting on him. "Worse," he continues, "you quit on yourselves." When he notices the dispiriting effect his words are having, he resorts to the patented exhortation all coaches carry in their back pockets. "I'm talking about having dreams," he tells them more gently. "You don't have dreams; you don't have anything." Like kids everywhere, they recognize an opportunity when they see one. Turning the tables on him, they point out that he quit on his dream. They challenge him on his own terms: If they win division championship, he will have to try out for the big leagues again. Of course, his team wins, and Morris, honoring the bargain, tries out.

Under the scrutiny of a recruiter's radar gun, he discovers, to his amazement, that he can pitch the ball at 98 miles an hour, 12 miles faster than he did at 25. Just as amazed but professionally skeptical, the scouts train a dozen more radar guns on Morris and tell him to throw and throw again. His speed confirmed, the franchise makes him an offer.

The rest is as you would expect. After some initial reluctance, his wife (Rachel Griffiths) urges him to take Tampa Bay's offer to join its minor league. She understands their family might not weather the regret her husband will suffer if he doesn't hit the road with the boys of summer. Better to endure his temporary absence and a budget straitened by minor-league pay ($600 per month) than risk their marriage.

For an inspirational film, *Rookie*'s performances are unusually restrained and all the more convincing for that. As Morris, Quaid gives us a portrait of a decent, dedicated family man. He looks and moves the part of an aging jock who has a special affinity for kids because he is still so much one himself. As his wife, Lorrie, Griffiths perfectly conveys a woman who loves her husband both for his manly devotion to his family and his boyish passion for athletics. The other actors are also fine. The film doesn't descend to the ersatz cuteness so typical of this genre. The boys on Morris's high-school team behave with all the unfocused energy of youth. They're heedlessly rebellious one moment and trustingly cooperative the next. Despite the soundtrack's smarmy flourishes, the film is almost visually chaste. This allows Hancock to get as much punch as possible from the few scenes in which he does resort to cine-

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matic italicizing.

I found one such scene especially suggestive, but perhaps not in the way it was intended. When Morris first arrives at Arlington, the camera watches him from above so that he's dwarfed against the monumental stadium walls. In the next shot, we see him from street level, walking through the gate and up a ramp. Hancock sets his camera on alternating angles so that everything in the frame seems to be about to slide off to the left in one shot and then to the right in the next. The entire sequence is meant as a visual analog to the excitement and anxiety Morris feels as he approaches his dream.

I couldn't help thinking, however, that this sequence also suggests the pitifully reduced role that the individual athlete plays in today's corporate sports industry. I recalled the huge scar we see on Morris's shoulder at the beginning of the film, marking the place modern medical technology had remade its ligature. Although the film barely mentions it, others have suggested that Morris's late-blooming pitching prowess began with this procedure. Hancock makes this scar a badge of honor and commitment. Morris is a man who has known defeat but hasn't surrendered—he's earned his second chance. Fair enough. Morris, no doubt took a substantial risk in returning to the game and suffered anew for his efforts. His willingness to undergo this ordeal is not without nobility. Still, I couldn't help thinking about the student athletes in my own university's high-powered athletic programs and how many of them bear surgical scars on their knees and shoulders. When money-making athletes, both collegiate and professional, suffer injury today, they're often advised to submit themselves to surgery to repair the damage. Coaches and agents are typically impatient with the body's lengthy healing process. Why lose an entire season of play when the doctor can put you back on the field within a few weeks? The best sequence in an otherwise forgettable Arnold Schwarzenegger film, *The Sixth Day*, shrewdly satirized this thinking by extending it to its all-too-logical conclusion. When a valuable quarterback sustains irreversible injuries on the field, he's whisked to a hospital where he's dispassionately put to death and then cloned. In no time at all, his vital double is once more scoring points for the franchise. Professional sports have surrendered so completely to the corporate ethos that athletes are now regarded as little more than very expensive appliances to be kept running and scoring at all costs.

Here's the question: Now that *The Rookie* has become a popular success, how long will it be before some young athlete asks a surgeon to replace his shoulder tendons with a few from his ankle? And how much are you willing to bet that he will have the full support of his sports- and scholarship-crazed parents? Why not? It's just like exchanging drive belts in a car engine. And if you can get better performance from the machine, what's the worry? Hey, you might want to throw some steroids into the tank while you're at it. Just make sure they're the untraceable kind created in a high-tech pharmaceutical lab.

Now there's a dream worthy of Dr. Frankenstein.

Despite my caviling, *The Rookie* is unusually well produced for a family film. *Clockstoppers*, on the other hand, is more the norm in this category. It's the kind of sloppily made, unpretentious fare that would have rated second billing on a double-feature marquee 50 years ago. Only its special effects are up to date, and, unexpectedly, they're quite charming. I can't remember when I last saw hypertime rendered so believably.

What's hypertime? Well, it begins with a molecular accelerator, the title's "clockstopper." You strap it on just like your wristwatch, push its buttons, and, pow, your molecules are pulsing at light speed while everything else around you stands stock still. (Don't worry—there's a scientist on hand to invoke Einstein's theory of relativity by way of murky explanation.)

Can you imagine the possibilities? Our 16-year-old protagonist Zak certainly does. Having accidentally come upon a molecular accelerator in his father's workshop, he straps it on and throws himself and his girlfriend into hypertime. As they leisurely stroll their California village among their frozen fellow citizens, they're perfectly at liberty to take their amusement where they will. I found it thoroughly heartwarming when they chose to use their power to put a couple of adolescent thugs in their place and then exact a bit of citizen revenge on the town's traffic cop, notorious for giving tickets before the meter runs out.

The clockstopper turns out to have been designed according to quantum principles developed by Zak's father, a distinguished university physics professor too busy circumventing time to give Zak much of it at all. A research and development lab, named "QT" and run by the sinister Henry Gates, has gotten hold of the absent-minded professor's ideas and developed the mechanism with funding from the Department of Defense. Sound familiar? Gates gets testy when he discovers one of his clockstoppers has left the lab and sends out operatives to correct the situation. The chase is on. You can be sure that, when the clock finally runs out, Zak and his father will discover that what they need most is some quality time together.

Directed by *Star Trek: The Next Generation* star Jonathan Frakes, *Clockstoppers* is not much, but I'll say this for it: The kids with whom I saw it found the film delightful. You might also, but try to see it in hypertime. That way, the movie's 90 minutes won't seem quite so long.

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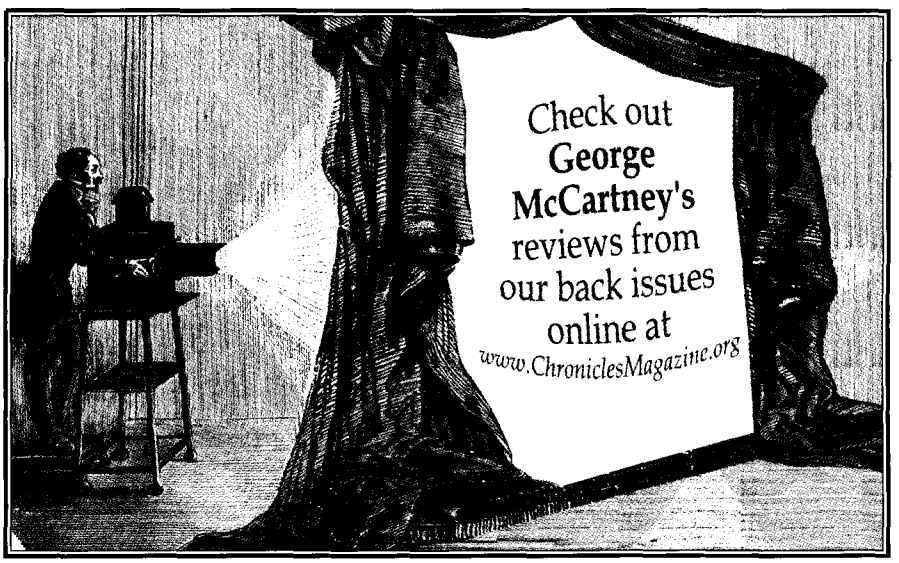

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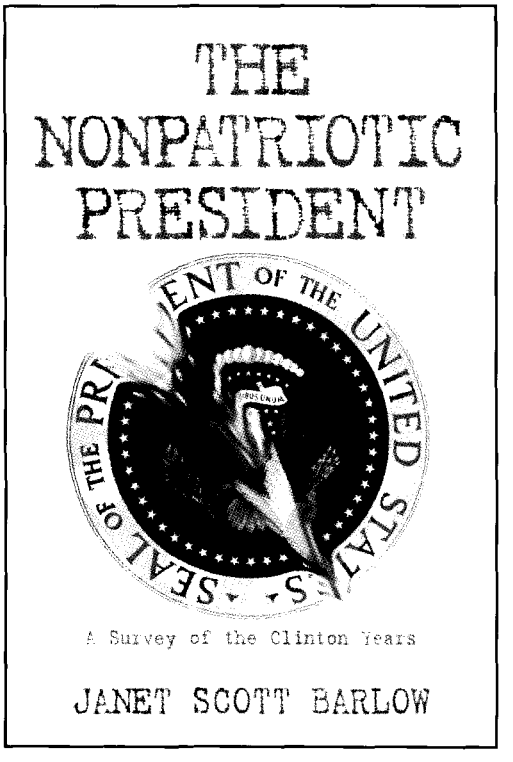

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